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A N
E S S A Y
O N
RELIGION.

Demonstrating,

That God's Being, and Existing as a Trinity in Unity, and his Attributes, are Self-evident, by the universal and concurrent Witness of his Works; and that his Attributes are the only infallible Test of Truth. Or, Plain Reasons for believing the Great Mysteries of the True Christian Religion; leaving no Room for any Doubt of the Truth, nor any Plea for implicit Faith.

Shewing the Fallibility of Human Reason; and the Certainty of Divine Revelation; God's general and particular Providence; Predestination and Free Will; Man's Fall, Redemption, and final Perfection: Asserting, That the Want of trying our Reason by the Test of Truth, is the Cause of misunderstanding the Scriptures, and of all Error in Religion: And proving, That by that Test, we may clearly distinguish Truth from Error; and be certain in all Things, that God requires us to learn, believe, and practice, for our Temporal and Eternal Happiness.

Introduc'd by a necessary Dissertation on Thought, and the wrong Notion of Free-Thinking.

THE SECOND EDITION; with Additions.

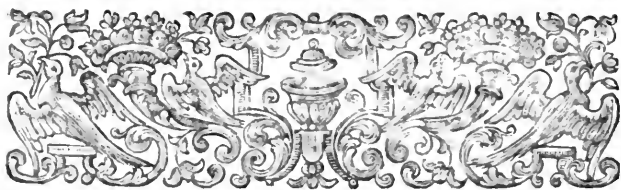
When the Son of Man comes, shall he find Faith on the Earth? Luke xviii. 8.

L O N D O N :


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T H E
P R E F A C E.

 *HERE being a continual Increase of the numerous, various, and contradictory Opinions of Religion in the World; and every one being positive that his own Notions are right: The Design of this Essay is to demonstrate, by an infallible Test of Truth, how far, and in what Particulars they are all of them wrong; and to point out the Way to bring them all to agree in the real and self-evident Truth.*

TRUTH is strong, as well as clear, and able to support itself; and is so far from needing the Deceit and Subterfuge of Error or Falsity, that it is obscured and weakened by it; not in Reality in itself, but too generally

THE PREFACE.

in the Opinion of Men; by making Certainties seem uncertain, and by mistaking Uncertainties for real Certainties, through self-Conceit, and a vain Dependence on frail and fallible Reason; and so neglecting to apply to and try their Reason, by a proper and incontestible Test of Truth; which ought to be done in all positive and negative Assertions; and without which, the more Men argue, the more they will wander from the only strait Way of Truth; and bewilder themselves in the many broad Ways of Error: and so Dissention and Difference in Opinion will increas, and which is too much the Cause of Infidelity and Atheism, Profaneness, and Wickedness, in all its various and pernicious Acts, and evil Consequences, and Effects.

BUT whilst I accuse others, that I may not be guilty of the same Fault, I shall not in this Essay (as is too generally done) impose upon the Reader my own Opinions, for Articles of Faith; but will fairly distinguish both, and only appeal to the Reader, whether my Opinions of such Points as I offer to his Consideration, are not more consonant to the self-evident Test of Truth; and consequently far more probably true than the too generally receiv'd Opinions on those Heads.

*AND I shall not presume to obtrude on the World and impose on Mankind, that meer
Opini-*

The P R E F A C E.

Opinions are necessary to be believ'd as Articles of Faith; but shall shew what Articles of Faith are incontestible, and therefore necessary to be believ'd, in Order to obtain Eternal Life.

THE Holy Scripture contains all that is necessary for us to believe, and do; but Men err, by not understanding the Scriptures, for want of applying them to the infallible Test of Truth; and by pretending to understand some Things that are mention'd, as Secrets of God; and not to be understood, in this Life, or not to be fully understood till reveal'd by their Accomplishment.

I hope none will imagine, that what I now offer to the Consideration of all Men, will, or possibly can, make any Disunion, Variance, or Disagreement amongst Christians: I am fully persuaded, it will greatly tend to unite Protestants of all Denominations; and to concert Papists to the true Christian, and only True Religion; by bringing all their different Opinions, to the evident Rule of True Faith in God; by the unerring, and only infallible Test of all religious Truth.

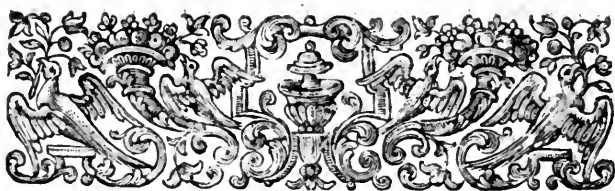
AND I think it to be the only Way, or, however, the best Way, to lay aside the unreasonable and unchristian Ferments, and needless Disputes, that are at this Time unjustly, im-
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The P R E F A C E.

prudently, and impolitically rais'd, in Mens Minds, to the Prejudice of Truth, and Disturbance of good Government; and to the Danger of the publick Peace and Tranquility.

FOR without the only infallible Test of Truth, which seems to be too generally overlook'd; Disputes must unavoidably increase, and be endless; and no Certainty of what most concerns our Temporal Welfare, and Eternal Happiness, can any other Way, or by any other Means be found. And I cannot doubt but that this Essay, by God's Blessing, will answer the End for which it is design'd; which is to distinguish Truth from Error, that so all may hold the Faith in Truth; and make one Sheepfold under the great Shepherd of our Souls, the Lord Jesus Christ: which is the sincere and Earnest Desire of

Philoveritas.



Introduction.

The AUTHOR finds it necessary to acquaint the Reader, that although the First Edition of the Essay was well approved of, by many Ingenious Gentlemen, and Pious Christians; yet he perceives that the Title beginning with Free-thinking, has made many good Christians take it for an Atheistical Performance: For which Reason, he has alter'd the Title, and prefix'd the following Introduction to the Essay.



OD whose Eternal and Immense Being is purely Spiritual, and the most pure Spirit; must needs be invisible to us, whilst our spiritual Souls are inclosed in elemental Bodies; But he has made all his wondrous, glorious Works, incontestible Evidences of his Being, and of his Attributes of Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, which imply Truth, Justice, and Mercy, summ'd up in Love.

But although this is real and apparent Truth, yet the Knowledge of the Truth is not to be acquired, without due Consideration and Reflection; but by rational Ratiocination, we may find such sufficient Reasons to believe the greatest Mysteries of the true Christian Religion, as will leave no Room for doubting of the Truth of them, or any Pretence for implicit Belief of any Thing in Religion.

And as we cannot attain to this most important Knowledge of the Truth, without careful and constant Cogitation, by a rational Method, and true Rule of Thought; I shall begin this Essay with a Dissertation on the Term *Thought*, or *Thinking*; and shew, that what is called *Free-thinking*, is mistaken and abused, both by Believers and Atheists.



PLAIN



PLAIN
REASONS

For Believing

The Great MISTERIES of the True
CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

Free-thinking has at this Time, so ill an Aspect, and bears so vile a Character, that it is become terrible to some, and odious and contemptible to many. But if we examine into the Reason of this undeserved Odium, we shall find, it proceeds from the false Pretences of Atheists and Deists to Free-thinking, and of such as are mistakenly called *Licentious Latitudinarians*; for they are illicitious, and but half Thinkers, and none of them are, or can be Free-Thinkers, for they restrain and confine their Thoughts to their vain Fancies, or Vices, or Self-Interest, and will not think freely.

And, indeed, real Free-thinking is so far from being an Evil, that it is the only Way to think rightly, justly, and truly; and the Want of Free-thinking, is the Cause of all Error and Wickedness.

And to demonstrate that this is the Truth of the Case — so much of the *Essay*, as relates to Free-thinking, will plainly shew, That there is not any Thing in Language, or in the Nature of Things, within our View or Cognizance, that is so requisite to be well known, and yet so little consider'd, or so much misunderstood by Mankind, as the Terms *Thought* and *Thinking*.

It may, with Truth, be said, that some Men of common Sense never think at all, or but very seldom think, to any Purpose or Effect: An Indolence of Mind having lull'd them into a careless Lethargy; or negligent Stupidity. And some Men of more Vivacity, and active Spirit, precipitately fly away with every vain Fancy, that suddenly enters the cogitable Seat of Man's Understanding, and offers itself to their Thoughts, and will not think, or enter into real Thought about any Thing.

And these Men generally mistake the first Impressions on the Mind for Thought, and upon the sudden Impulse of a simple Idea, that is not intuitive, do oft, without revolving on, and comparing it with other necessary Ideas, precipitately proceed to will, and rashly to speak, and imprudently to act, without any Examination whether it is a good or an evil Idea, that is offer'd to their Thought and Consideration: And for want of due Thought, they fix it into an Opinion, which they rest satisfied in, without knowing whether it is true or false, right or wrong, except in such Things, as they, by sad Experience, find to have been wrong Conceptions, when too late, to prevent the Evil, or amend the Error.

To prevent our being blindly led to Ruin by others that may not know well, or that mean ill, *Mat. xv. 6, 9, 14.* Christ has commanded us to judge of ourselves what is right, *Luke xii. 57.* But though we must not implicitly give up ourselves to others Opinions, or pretended Opinions, neither must we be so self-conceited, as to depend entirely on our own Capacity, Knowledge, and Understanding, but must consider others Opinions, and hear and ask Advice of wise, knowing, and good Men, and then try all Things by the Test of Truth; by all which, we cannot fail of making a true Judgment: But to judge peremptorily, in Things in which frail Reason can have no Umpire, or ~~Tast~~, but its own Imagination, is generally

generally self-conceited, and is oftener wrong than right. And such a Temper, with Respect to Society is not equitable, but unsocial, and unfit for Society; for in Society both Sides must in many Things yield to each other, in an equitable Proportion, as our Safety is best preserv'd by publick Security. And therefore self-interested Partiality in personal Concerns, is dangerous, and often ruinous. On the other Hand, always to follow another's Dictates, or Opinions unexamined, and without well weighing their Reasons given, will never keep the Serpent's Wisdom, and the Dove's Innocence in a just *Equilibrium*; and if one out-balances the other, we shall, in Effect, be either Knaves, or Fools, *Mat. x. 16.*

And it is through an indolent Want of real Thought, or from restrain'd Thought, that some Men rashly, or supinely, and inconsiderately give up themselves to sudden Fancies and wild Chymeras, and fall into an implicit Belief of Falsities and Errors, and teach them to others for real Truths.

And others as supinely and implicitly believe whatever is told them, or is unintelligibly suggested or insinuated to them, without trying it by any rational Rule or Test of Truth; or considering whether it comes from a Man of Probity, or of subtle Design to deceive; whether he speaks well or ill Meaning; or whether he is a Man of good Understanding and solid Judgment, or a meer empty, vain, self-conceited Flash, or an arrogant and insolent Imposer, and ignorant of what he pretends to know and understand, and to assert for Truth; or may himself be imposed on, without designing to impose on others Credulity.

Some Men hate to think, and some, for Want of Thinking by a true Rule of Thought, and Test of Truth, grow weary of Thought, or are afraid to think, and so fly from Thought, or chase it away as a destructive Enemy; when the more they practise it, the more they will find it a most delightful Companion, and their best Friend.

The wou'd-be Atheist either dares not think, or is so wilful in Wickedness, that he will not think on what must needs convince him of the Folly and fatal Consequence of Infidelity.

And

And it is for Want of finding out by Thought, a true Key of knowledge, and a just Rule of Thought, and a right Test of Truth, that the World is so full of Error, Disagreement, and Confusion; or by Mens wicked Devices and false Assertions, mask'd with a Glare of seeming Truth and Goodness, to impose upon, ensnare, and subject others to their tyrannick and evil Usurpations over their Souls, Bodies, and Estates.

But by real Thought, rightly apply'd, we may arrive at a greater Certainty of the most important Things, which, at our first Ideas of them, seem most difficult to discern, and most hard to be understood, than we can do of Things the most indifferent or the least worth our Notice or Concern: For in Religion, we have the incontestible Evidence of God's Self-evident and infallible Attributes; but in secular and common Affairs, we have only the bare Opinion of our own fallible Reason, except in Things which imply Virtue and Moral Duties, and they are a very material Part of Religion, and are understood and determined by God's most Holy Attributes, WHICH ARE THE ONLY INFALLIBLE TEST OF ALL RELIGIOUS TRUTH.

And God's Being and Attributes are self-evident, as all his wondrous Works testify and declare, *Rom. i. 19, 20. Psalm viii. Psalm xix. Psalm civ. Job xxxviii. Gen. ch. i. and ch. ii.* And all God's Attributes are Powers, and all powerful, as is seen in all his Works and Acts, in which infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, are apparently display'd; and they act in Concert and Unity; and therefore *Mat. xxii. 29.* should be render'd in the Plural, *Powers of God*, though all his Attributes act joyntly as one Power, but should be understood and distinguished as a Plural, in Concord, and to act in Unity as a Singular; and not contrary to each other, or one alone without the other, as Men too often make them do. God's Attributes in Concord and Unity, are the certain and only infallible Test of all Religious Truth, and leave no Room to doubt of the Truth, nor any Plea for implicit Faith.

He that believes any Thing implicitly, knows not whether his Belief is true or false; for he may believe an honest Man that is mistaken in his Opinion; or a close design-

designing Hypocrite, a Wolf in Sheep's cloathing ; or a Syren that will first allure, and then devour : But many honest Men have different Opinions in Religion, and each believes his Opinion right ; which shews how insufficient human Reason is to judge of divine Truths.

But neither the Danger of implicit Faith, nor the Fallibility of human Reason alone, need to make any Man a Sceptick or an Infidel ; for if a Man will try Opinions, by applying his Reason to the infallible Test of Truth, he cannot err, for whatever is agreeable to that Test, or not contrary to it, must needs be Truth ; and by this Rule and Test, we may judge and determine, what is divine Revelation, and what is not ; and clearly distinguish between the Voice of God, and the Voice of Man. And if we cannot so easily determine in Things merely indifferent, and therefore left by God to Man's Will, we need not fear God's Displeasure in such Points, nor need we disagree amongst ourselves about them.

But to shew how necessary free and unconfin'd Thought is, in forming right Reason, and in applying it to the Test of Truth, for just Determinations ; I must observe, That the first perceptible Motion of the Spirit of Life in Man's Intellect is Thought ; and that is the Spring of our Will, and of all our Words and Actions ; or more particularly the various Ideas that are continually, either new created or regenerated, or recollected and renewed in our intellectual Souls ; are the Foundation or Fountain of all our Thoughts : And our Thoughts are the first Mover or Spring of our Will ; and our Will is the Dictator of all our Words and Acts ; but our Reason is our Council, and from that our Will should take its Resolutions, both positive and negative, if try'd by the Test of Truth.

And if the Will does not govern the Thoughts, by an unbiass'd and impartial Resolution, form'd upon true Reason, it can never command, or restrain our Words and Actions, so as to chuse good, or to do good and to refuse evil, and to forbear doing evil ; and without free, unbiass'd, and well regulated Thought, we cannot either speak, or act aright.

And it is for Want of this rational Free-thinking that good Thoughts are disliked and suppressed, and not favour'd and put into Act ; and that evil Thoughts are countenanc'd

tenanc'd and assisted, and forced on to all evil Actions. The Heart or Soul is a Fountain that cannot at once send forth both bitter Water and sweet, *James* iii. 11. but at different Times may limit both good and evil, ver. 10, and whole Chapter. *Mat.* vii. 15 to 20. the Tree and the Fruit may be bad, but, chap. xii. 33. it may be made good. *Mat.* xv. 17 to 20, and *Eph.* iv. 14, 15, and whole Chapter, is a Rule by which to govern our Thoughts, Words, and Works; and so is *Mat.* v. vi. vii. and chap. xxii. 37 to 40: And chap. vii. 12. is the Sum of the whole Duty of Man; and *Deut.* xvi. 5, and chap. x. 12, 13. *Levit.* xix. 18. *Mich.* vi. 7, 8. is of the same Import; and *Isaiah* i. 15 to 20. *Deut.* xxxiii. 25 to 29. *Job* xix. 25, 26, 27. *John* iii. 15, 16. chap. vi. 35, 47. chap. xii. 26. chap. xiv. 1, 2, 3. chap. xvii. 3, 24, shews Man's Eternal Reward.

But Animals have no future, certain, specific State of Life, and so no future Rewards for Duty; but they have various, gradual Degrees of instinctive Thought, suitable to their several Natures, though not perceptible of the Deity.

But Man has such a vast and extensive Degree of Thought, and such an excellent and ample Quality of Ratiocination, as by a long and studious Enquiry to discover a Primordial Cause and Supreme Governor of all created Things and Beings and to find plain Evidence of his Attributes, and even hence to prove a Revelation of the Divine Being, and of his Precepts, Instructions, Laws, and Ordinances to Man; for God has made his Works Evidences of it, as I shall fully prove in a proper Place.

And to forbid us Freedom of Thought, and to impose an implicit Belief of Things upon us, without our Leave or Liberty to examine them, is contrary to God's Commands, and to our natural Property, Right, and Privilege, and our own Good, our Safety and Happiness, Temporal and Eternal.

It is to forbid us the Use of the principal Faculty which God has given us, to direct us to right Means, and a true Method to distinguish Good from Evil; and it is to deprive us of the solid and permanent Delights of the Mind, which are vastly superior to the fading, fleeting, vanishing

ing Pleasures of Sense : And it is to disallow us the Use of our Reason, which depends on Thought and Consideration, and on which depends our Safety and Happiness, in the Conduct of all our Affairs, and Actions, moral and divine ; and to deprive us of the most necessary, useful, and noble Qualities that are in our Nature ; the Want of which, must needs make us Slaves to our Senses, unstable, unsafe, and insecure from Ruin, Temporal and Eternal ; as through Want of Thought we can't distinguish Truth from Error, Right from Wrong, and so not be safe or happy.

And it must needs set us, who are the chief of God's Works in this World, below the inferior Parts of the Animal Creation, who have each a particular Instinct suited to their several different Natures, by which their Senses are directed. But the Want of which Instinct in Man, is abundantly supply'd in a superior Manner, by our Reason, if we will make a right Use of it, and which can't be done without Freedom of Thought ; nor can we know God aright, who is our chief Good, and our ultimate End and Happiness, without Free-thinking.

Free-thinking is a sedate and rational revolving in our Mind, whatever Ideas suddenly present themselves to our View and Consideration : And without this revolving Ratiocination, perform'd by due Comparisons made of one Thing with another, and thence learning to make a due Estimate of each Thing, Man is, and needs must be but a meer Caprice, void of real Thought, and is hurry'd away with every wild or vain Fancy that first strikes his Imagination, and so runs on headlong to Ruin and irretrievable Misery, through Want of Free-thinking. Wild Fancy leads Men to all wrong Notions and rash Actions, for Want of a thorough Examination by right Rules of Reason, brought to some certain Test of Right and Truth.

So that whether some Men seem, through indolent Superstition, to believe any Absurdity, and think it their Duty to impose their wrong Notions upon others Credulity ; or that there are many Men, who, out of stupid Infidelity, and wicked Design, would subject all Men to their arbitrary Will, and tyrannical Oppressions, and so would not allow us Freedom of Thought, without which

our Lives would be a mere random Dream, and subject to the most absurd Delusions : Yet we ought not, as too many do, supinely and tenaciously adhere to their Mistakes, or vile Impositions, and tyrannical Injunctions, without any Examination, because we are audaciously and insolently told by Popish Priests and others, That all Examinations of Religious Articles of Faith are damnable Sins.

For if we don't think freely, we can never think rightly, justly, effectually, conclusively, and with Certainty, to any End or Purpose.

But then, if we think wildly, and at Random, without a right Rule of Reason, form'd from due revolvings of Mind and suitable Comparisons, and a real Test of Truth, our Thoughts will be inconclusive and uncertain, or fix in Error, rather than in Truth. For we can't tell whether our Thoughts are right or wrong without it.

But too many of those who call themselves Free-Thinkers, or that are call'd so by others, are not real, but fancy'd Free-Thinkers ; for they neither do, nor will think freely, but arbitrarily restrain their Thoughts from the principal Objects of Thought ; and confine them to their own vain Fancies, wild Imaginations, Humours, Passions, Vices, Aversions, and mistaken Self-Interest, and think rashly, precipitately, and wildly, without a true Rule of Thought, or real Test of Truth ; and such Thought is irrational, and unworthy of the Name of Thinking.

Nor can we, by the best Use we can make of our Reason, by any Rule alone, arrive at any Certainty in Religion, without applying our Reason, to the only real Test of Truth : To which End we must lay aside all Prejudice of Education, and Custom, and Habit, and think calmly, coolly, carefully, and cautiously, and sedately, seriously, deliberately, and disinterestedly (as Interest is too commonly misunderstood : For our true Interest is not to suffer our Reason to be captivated by our Senses) and we must think impartially, to free ourselves from Imposition, in being deceived, and from the Delusion of deceiving ourselves.

A Man

A Man may have a vast natural Capacity for Wisdom, but can never be wise, without supernatural Aid, or true Learning, Experience, and due Observation; and no one can make right Observations, without free, impartial thinking. Partial thinking is byas'd, restrain'd, and confin'd, and not free; and so fixes in Error: But free, impartial thinking, will discover Truth, and fix in Certainty and Goodness.

And without free, impartial Thought, a Man that has the greatest Capacity for Wisdom, will, by an indolent Simplicity or Partiality, precipitate himself into Error and Wickedness, and there fix; and so become the greatest and worst of all Fools; and the most dangerous and pernicious Enemy to human Society.

It is usual to say, That such an Author has a different Way of thinking from such an Author; or, I think, very differently from such a one, or in a different Manner than he thinks; which shews, it is for Want of free and thorough thinking by an infallible Test of Truth.

Some Mens vainly depending on frail Reason, and others blindly giving themselves up to implicit Faith, are the first Causes of Error; and Error leads to Infidelity and unbelief of the Truth; and unbelief of the Truth makes Men wickedly substitute such Falsities instead of Truth, as best suits their proud tyrannical Spirits, and best effect their avaritious Purposes, and secure and establish their arbitrary despotick Dominion over their Fellow Creatures: And that insuperable Extream, forces Resistance, Confusion, and Anarchy. And, on the contrary, partial Self-interest, and Want of Submission to equitable Laws, sometimes raises Rebellion against good Governors.

And all our real different Opinions in Religion and Government, proceed from Want of Thought; or from thinking without a true Rule of Thought, and a right Key of Knowledge, and an infallible Test of religious Truth; and without which, the Scriptures are misunderstood, and taken in different, and contrary Senses; or out of evil Designs, by wilfully mistaking the true Knowledge of God, and wickedly imagining that he is such a One as themselves, *Psalms*. l. 21. And so Men will not understand the Scriptures in any Sense, but such as they

invert, and pervert, to suit their Vices and Fancies, or their Superstition, or Tyranny and Oppression.

But either wilfully to confine our Thoughts, or to take Liberty to think, only of what pleases our Fancies, or suits our Humours, is not Freedom of Thought; and to think without a proper and necessary Rule and Test, is not the Way to be either wise, safe, or happy; and it is not thinking freely, because we restrain and confine our Thoughts to some particular Things only, that we like, and so will not think freely on all Things, and especially not on those Things that are most worth thinking on, and most to our true Interest and real Advantage.

But to regulate our Thoughts by a rational and true Rule of Thought, in Order to find a right Key of Knowledge, and then to try our Thoughts, by the infallible Test of Truth, is so far from being a Restraint upon thinking, that it is the best Help to think rightly, and to prevent frail and fallible Reason, from being deceived and captivated by fanciful Ideas and vain Imaginations, and being corrupted by deluding Sense, worldly Vanities, and wicked Inclinations; and to be freed from Absurdities, superstitious Whimsies, and Errors; and the only Way to bring any significant and good Thought to a right Solution, and certain Determination. We must think freely, but not wildly or wickedly, for that is the greatest Folly; for Folly and Wickedness restrain Freedom of Thought, and prevent the Use of Reason, and confines Thought to Sense, and enslaves the rational Mind to childish Sense; and when a Man subjects his Reason to Sense, and enslaves his Mind to Wickedness; he at first will not think freely, and when sunk into habitual Wickedness, or stupify'd by superstitious Fancies, he cannot, nay, he dares not think freely, and so becomes unable to rescue himself, by Thought and Resolution, from impending Ruin and Misery.

We must think of Wickedness, Fraud, and Deceit, not to act it, but to guard against it: Of Evil, to avoid doing or suffering Evil: Of Good, to practise it, and to enjoy the Benefit of it; and by comparing Evil with Good, to discern the Excellence of Good. And we must think of the Devil, to abhor and resist him and his Wickedness; and of God, to love him above all Things,

Things, as the Supreme and most Excellent Good : Of ourselves, Vices, Passions, and Appetites, to subdue them : Of Hell, to prevent our suffering its Torments ; and of Heaven, and its superlative Happiness and Delight, how to enjoy it. In Order to which, we must, by just and cautionary thinking on Good and Evil, be wise as Serpents in preventing Evil, and innocent as Doves in forbearing to do Evil.

And to think only on the Pleasures of Sense, is not to think freely, but to restrain and confine our Thoughts, and thereby to lose the true and superior Delights which the Mind or Soul enjoys in rational and divine Contemplation ; and thro' want of due Thought and Consideration, we deprive ourselves of the chief Part of sensual Pleasures, and by irregular Use of them, turn them to Pain and Misery ; for if we did really think, and not rather stifle or banish our Thoughts, or fly from Thought, we should so use all Things, as to have the true and lasting Enjoyment of them.

It is for want of free and real Thought, that the Miser makes his Money his God, and starves himself in the midst of Plenty, by his thoughtless Idolatry ; and the profuse, and the slothful, are brought to want, through want of real Thought ; and it is by thoughtless idolizing their Appetites, that the Drunkard and Glutton destroy themselves ; and by thoughtless idolizing their Passions, the proud Man sinks low, and the Tyrant is his own great Tormentor ; because they stifle or banish the good Ideas that are impressed in their Minds, and will not think freely and fully about them ; being resolved to indulge their Passions, Appetites, and Vices, and not to think what will be the sad Event, and ruinous End of them.

That call'd licentious, is illicentious, or unlicentious thinking, and is not Free-thinking, but confin'd to whatever Particulars they fancy, to please some Vice, or sooth some self-conceited Error. Or if they think atheistically, their Thoughts are still confin'd ; and though some are called Latitudinarians, and others Moderate Thinkers, the Thoughts of the one are confined as much as the other ; for those called Latitudinarians, will not think of any Thing, but in Defence of Infidelity or Vice, and so are but half Thinkers, as well as the moderate, or rather indolent

indolent and idle Thinkers. And if none were meer superficial, or half Thinkers, none could be Atheists or meer Deists : They are but half Thinkers, and it is the worst half, and shews their Thoughts are not worth the Name of real Thought ; for they think only on what, with Respect to Man's true Interest, is worthless thinking.

And it is for want of Free-thinking, or ill Design, that makes some Men call Free thinking Atheism ; when nothing but the want of free, impartial, contemplative Thought, can make Men Atheists, or meer Deists, or Idolaters, and superstitious ; and it is the want of Free-thinking that plunges Men into all Sorts of Error and Wickedness.

Without constant, free, diffusive, and expatiate Thoughts, we cannot make a right Use of our free Will, nor form right Rules of Reason, to govern our Words and Actions. But, indeed, to follow a wild roving Fancy, is not to think, but to precipitate ourselves into Error and Ruin : We must think by Rule, and not at Random, for that is irrational ; and we must try all our Thoughts by a proper Test of Right and Wrong, and in Religion, by God's Attributes, as the only Test of Truth.

In Religion, if we believe any Thing implicitly, we may as well believe all the Absurdities of Heathenism or Mahometism.

But if we will believe nothing but what we can fully understand, we can in Reality believe nothing at all : For the least Particle of elemental Matter, surpasses our Understanding, and much more does the active Spirit within us surpass it.

The more we enquire, and search into Things, the more we shall find them mysterious : But Creation is the greatest of all Miracles, and Mysteries ; and all created Things, are gradual Mysteries, from a Particle of Sand, to the greatest and noblest Thing in Nature. But yet there is an intallible Test of all religious Truth, by which we may distinguish between true, and falsely pretended Mysteries and Miracles ; and between true, and false Propositions or Assertions.

When

When Men are too ungrateful to God, and so brutish in ill Habits, as to love the good Things which they enjoy, more than the bounteous benign Giver of them; and when they cease to love God, they would cast off all Fear to offend him, and value the World, and its transitory Pleasures, more than the eternal Joys of Heaven; they then would rather seem to believe a false Religion, which they secretly deride, and make a Jest of, than to think so much of true Religion, as to find Reason to believe it.

And the imposing and enforcing an implicit Belief, of any Thing contrary to God's Attributes, or to Man's Reason founded on God's Attributes, as inevitable Predestination to Eternal Torments is; or any Thing that is contrary to our Senses, as Transubstantiation is, and which depreciates the Efficacy of Christ's own sufficient Sacrifice of himself, offer'd once for all, and so leaves no Need of any other Sacrifice for Sin; such Absurdities and gross Errors, are apparently the Cause of Atheism, or Deism, and consequently of all Degrees of Infidelliry, Illiberty, and Illicencioufness, and Wickedness, and is gross Idolatry, and is prejudicial and dangerous to the social, and personal Happiness of Mankind: For when Men are taught to believe Things implicitly, which they cannot believe rationally, as being contrary to God's Attributes; the few Superstitious that do believe them, contrary to Reason, are of ill Consequence; and the greater Part that openly pretend to believe them, but secretly disbelieve them, they either believe nothing at all, or only what suits their Passions and Vices, and so act much Evil as private Hypocrites; or as audacious, prophane, and dishonest, Defrauders and Disturbers of the publick Peace and Welfare; and are the Cause of publick Calamities, and often of general Ruin.

And hence most Men that believe nothing of Religion, joyn with the Superstitious, and indolently ignorant, in applauding implicit Faith, and pretend, though contrary to Scripture, *John* v. 39. 1 *John* iv. 1. and 1 *Thes.* v. 21. *Luke* xii. 50. that they think it a Sin, to search and try all Things, so as to know whether they are true or false. And the World is partly deluded by weak, or ill-designing Men;

Men : and partly delude themselves into all the Errors in Religion, that are in the World.

But God has made his Works such plain Evidences of his Being, Attributes, and Revelation of his Will, and Laws to Man, and of uniting Spirits with Elements, and of a separate State of spiritual Substances and Elements, and of the Union, Separation, and Reunion of them, and given such incontestible Evidences of Things miraculous, and surpassing the common Nature of Things, that it leaves no Room for implicit Belief, in any Point of religious Faith, as I shall more particularly shew in a proper Place.

The Magnet, or Load-Stone, is the most wonderful Thing in Terrestrial Nature. I shall not now, be particular on that Point : It is sufficient at present to say, that its surprising Effects declare the Wisdom and Power of God, sufficiently to silence an Atheist ; and to enforce us to adore the All-wise, and Omnipotent Creator.

God has, by creating Man's intellectual Mind, in his Own Image, impress'd such Marks of Sovereignty in his Aspect and Form, that irrational Creatures of the greatest Size, have an awful Dread of his Authority and Power over them, stamp'd in their Natures ; which they don't resist, except that rapacious Creatures, when press'd by Hunger, or provok'd by Attempts to destroy them, are prompted to rebel and resist him : And yet, when forc'd by Hunger to seek Food, if a Man will quietly yield them his Horse, they will not touch him. And we see, that a Number of Horses will submit to the Command of a Boy, and quietly bear his Lashes ; all which, if well consider'd, is sufficient to convince an Atheist, of the Supreme Being of God, and of the Image of God's Sovereignty impress'd in Man, though by his Fall it is much impair'd and defaced.

Every Thing within our natural Knowledge, or that may be discover'd by Art, shews the wonderful Wisdom, Power, and Goodness of God and his good Providence, in the infinite, gradual Variety of Things, made for our Use to serve and delight us : And whatever is worthless, noxious, or hurtful, demonstrates the Value of that which is good in all Degrees, to Things most excellent : And whatever is the Cause of Death, opens the Scene of new
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and eternal Life, if we deserve not a second Death, by our ill Use of this Life.

By Observation we find, that all created Things are link'd together, by a gradual Concatenation ; and that there are gradual Degrees of Life runsthrough all Things within our Knowledge. There is a real and strong Life in Earth, and a secret Spirit in Earth that gives it Life; and nourishes it in Life, enabling it, by the Power of God, to produce Minerals, Vegetives, and Animals : And there is an Analogy runs through the Whole, and links all Things in Nature together ; Mineral Stratas, before they are fix'd Metals, produce Vegirives ; and the sensible Plant, which shrinks from your Touch, and Plant Animals so call'd, link the vegetive to the animal Nature ; and amphibious Creatures link the aqueous and terrene Animals ; and the flying Birds link the terrene and aerial Natures ; and the animal Life has gradual Degrees from two, to five Senses ; and the animal Life is link'd to the common Spirit of Life ; and in Man it links the elemental and spiritual Life, to the intellectual Perfection, and angelick Nature ; which we ought not to expect fully to understand, till we are entirely spiritual ; which we have sufficient Reason to believe will be, in a future State of Life, when we shall be purely spiritual, in our whole Being. All elemental Natures, are the Production of Spirit, and may be rarify'd to Spirit ; either to the common Spirit of Air, or to be and remain in distinct, individual, spiritual Bodies.

And as there is an infinite, gradual, concatenate Variety, in visible elemental Nature, so there is, and needs must be, in invisible spiritual Nature, from a Medium to contrary Extreams. Angels are of several Classes, Ranks, and Degrees, both good and evil : And by God's Power and Command, extraordinary Acts are done by them, in several Degrees, in extreme Cases, and on arduous Occasions. And in Mediums gradually, from both Extreams, several Sorts of inferior Spirits act upon us in ordinary Cases, and on extraordinary Occasions ; and which every Man of common Sense may perceive, by due Observation ; and as the spiritual and elemental Natures are link'd together, it leaves no Chasm in created Nature. And as to the Chasm which must needs be between God and

Creatures, it is filled up in Christ ; as I shall more particularly demonstrate, in a proper Place.

It is Want of free and contemplative Thinking, that makes some Men stupidly imagine, that God's Works of Creation are imperfect, and his Providence not well order'd ; and absurdly to fancy, that they cou'd more wisely design and concert, and more effectually perfect all Things, than now they appear to their Self-Conceit, thro' Ignorance, to be order'd : and tis through Ignorance and vain Self-Conceit, that they oft find Fault with the Conduct of publick Affairs, and of the Oeconomy of private Persons, whilst their own Affairs are very impolitickly manag'd, for want of Thought.

They who absurdly imagine, that the Order and Beauty of the World is not right, find that what pleases them at one Time of Life does not at another : Their Sentiments of Things change in every Stage of Life, from Youth to Old Age. And they who think the universal Frame irregular, or any Part of it, can no more judge of the excellent Symmetry and Order of the Whole, than a small Insect endu'd with Sight, can discover the Regularity and Beauty of a large, well-compos'd Garden.

But Order and Beauty, is God's Composure of all Things ; and what Men call Deformity, or Defect, is a necessary Contrast, to illustrate what is more perfect. But, alas ! How should the whole Universe be survey'd by our finite Sight ? And it is a childish Vanity in Man to expect to know more of visible Order and Beauty, than is possible to his stated Nature and finite Make : But we are so happy, as to be far better able to understand invisible Things by Reason, apply'd to the infallible Test of Truth, than to understand visible Things by Sense.

Ignorant, self-conceited People, think the Constellations of Stars irregular ; but so every distant Object of great Magnitude, at different Points of Prospect, seems to be ; but that is through our own unavoidable Incompetency of greater Perception and Knowledge, and not any real Irregularity of the distant Object.

Fools think all the Stars should be in such an exact Figure, as the seven Stars are painted on a Sign Board : They are, doubtless, in a more curious and beauteous Order ; But how should our Eyes survey the innumera-
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ble Multitude of distant Stars, so as to discover the Symmetry of the Whole? Our Orb or World, is in a most noble Symmetry and useful Order, though broke at the general Deluge, as the scraggy Rocks on Mountains and Sea Coasts demonstrate.

But God's Wisdom does now, and more fully will appear in all his Acts and Deeds; and that Man's Reason is fallible, and so cannot alone be a certain Test of Truth in Religion, appears in this; whoever reflects upon the Designs of his Mind, the Resolutions of his Will, and the Result of his Actions, will find by the Effects of them, that he is not infallible, nor absolute, nor always consistent in the Government of himself, *James v. 17. Acts xiv. 15.* And witness the various Opinions that are in the World, as to what Men call natural Religion, and mistaken Piety, Morality, and Virtue: Not but in the most ignorant Parts of the Earth, there is some Remains of God's Original Laws and Ordinances given to *Adam*: But Men have mixed them with wild Fancies of various Deities, and asserting for Morality, whatever most suits their own partial Views and Interests, contrary to Equity and the mutual good of the whole Society. And have set up, for Virtue, whatever is most pleasing to deprav'd Sense, and that suits their Passions and Vices.

And, indeed, neither *Peter*, nor any of the Apostles, or Prophets, were infallible in any Thing, but in what they were, in a supernatural Manner, inspired by God, *Mat. xvi. 23. Gal. ii. 11 to 14. Acts x. 14 to 34. chap. xiv. 15. James v. 7. 1 Kings xiii. 9, 18, 24. Jonah i. 1, 2, 3. chap. ii. 8. chap. iv. 1 to 9, 10, 11*; nor were *Noah, Abraham, Moses, or Airon*, or any of the Patriarchs, or High Priests, infallible in Things in which they had not God's immediate Inspiration: And in whatever they were inspir'd, they prov'd, either by Miracles, or by the fulfilling of all their Prophecies; except such as are not to be fulfilled yet, or not till the End of this World.

Nor are Angels all-knowing, *1 Pet. i. 12.* or intallible, *Job iv. 18, 19.* but by God's Power, after they have past their Time of Tryal; and then not all-knowing, even when they are in the full and final Completion of their

Being ; which Man is not in this Life, and so cannot be infallible in this World.

The wicked Lives, erroneous Tenets, and contradictory Edicts of several Popes, shew that they are not infallible ; and the contrary Opinions of Synods and General Councils, shew that they are not infallible.

The Holy Scriptures do contain the whole reveal'd Will and Law of God ; and all that he requires us to believe, and practice : But by Man's frail Reason alone, they may be so differently understood, that, as Cardinal *Belarmine* said, 'They may be made a Nose of Wax, or Plummet of Lead, to be turn'd which Way, and to whatever purpose a Man pleases. Nor can Man, by his Reason alone, distinguish between the Spirit of Truth, and the Spirit of Error.

But though Man, cannot, by his own Reason, rightly understand some Parts of the Holy Scriptures, or distinguish all Religious Truths from Error ; it is no Misfortune to him, nor does it shew any Want of God's Goodness to him : For it is not necessary for Man to be infallible in this Life, it being fully sufficient for him that there is an infallible Test of Truth ; and that there is a certain Rule and Method of Thought, by which he may rightly understand the self-evident, certain, incontestible, and infallible Test of all Religious Truth ; which God has given us, by which to distinguish Truth from Error ; and by the due Observation of which, we may rightly understand the Scriptures, and so cannot err in Religion ; and in which the Holy Spirit is our sure Guide ; but we are not to be led by every Spirit, but must try them, and so shall know God's Holy Spirit, *John* xiv. 26. 1 *John* iv. 1. by the Test of Truth.

And Free-thinking, by a right Rule of Thought, will lead and conduct us right, and bring our Reason to discover and concede to that infallible Test of Truth.

And to think regularly, and rationally, is no Restraint on Thought, it only guides us to think rightly, justly, and with Certainty : And by these Rules we must extend our Thoughts, as far as our Faculties can reach, in Ideas of Eternity ; and expatiate our Thoughts wide about in Immenity ; as they are incontestible Witnesses, of the only One, Eternal, Self-existent, and Infinite Being :
And

And we must freely contemplate, his infinitely numerous, gradually various, curious, magnificently glorious, and wondrous Works, as Evidences of his infinite Wisdom, Power, Goodness, and good Providence: And without which, our Knowledge will be imperfect, and unresolv'd, *Psalms* viii. 3. and whole Psalm; and *Psalms* xix. and many other Psalms, shew both the Pleasure and Profit of such Contemplation, and *1 Cor.* xv. 40, 41.

I shall, in this Essay, occasionally repeat, such Things as have been too little, and seldom, or, by too many Men, never thought on; and yet are of all Things, most necessary to be known, that so I may, if possible, convince those Peepers into Books, who if they don't find every Objection, instantly answer'd, and their wrong Notions immediately confuted, go away triumphant, as imagining they are infallible; and plume themselves in their vain Self-conceit, and hug themselves in the grossest Errors.

We are commanded throughout the Holy Scriptures to use our utmost Endeavours to attain to the Knowledge of God, and to employ all our Faculties and Senses, as far as we can possibly do, in the Search of God, now in this Life, in which our spiritual Minds are inclosed in elemental Bodies, and so can't visibly behold the Divine Being, the Deity; *Acts* xvii. 27. *Psal.* xxxiv. 8. *Psal.* cxix, 97 to 106, and *Psalms* viii. and *Psalms* xix.

But as his Holy Attributes are Self-evident; and as all his infinitely numerous, various, curious, beauteous, and wonderful Works are plain and incontestible Evidences of his Attributes, they prove his Being; and we must, as we are commanded by God himself, muse upon, and thoughtfully and studiously contemplate the infinite gradual Variety of all perceptible Things, and their necessary Opposites or Contraries, which must needs be, in the Nature of Things, to illustrate the Whole, and to give us a right and true Estimate of all and each Thing; and thereby to learn the true Value of what is most excellent, and therein and thereby discern the excellent, wise, and beneficent Design of God's good Providence.

And by this diligent Contemplation, we may evidently discover God's Attribute of Wisdom, which implies Goodness, and his infinite Power, to effect whatever his
infinite

infinite Wisdom designs, for the Good of the Whole, and of each Part, as in the final End will appear to us : And though we cannot now fully understand the Ends of God's wise and good Providence in all Things, yet we may understand them so sufficiently, as to excite and establish our Faith in God, and our Hope of Happiness in the final End of his Providence : And if we suffer for the ill Use or Abuse of that noble Talent of Free-Will, which God has necessarily and graciously implanted in us, it must needs be our own Faults.

And we must all consider, that as God's Attributes are, and must needs be, the certain and only infallible Test of all religious Truth, so without that Test, we cannot possibly, by our fallible Reason, rightly understand the Holy Scriptures, *Mat. xxii. 29.* nor rightly discern true or false Translations, or good from evil Spirits, 1 *John iv. 1.* as before hinted. But if we apply all our Cogitations to that infallible Test, we cannot err : And yet we can't possibly do this without Freedom of Thought, and in doing it, our Thoughts must be, as far as is possible, as unbounded and unlimited as Eternity and Immensity are : And to restrain our Thoughts is to fix us in wretched Ignorance, and to sink us below the capacious Intellect which God has implanted in us, to enoble, and perfect our Being : And it is to sink us beneath the Brutes, who have an Instinct that we have not.

All which shews, that it is our Duty and Interest to think freely ; in doing which, I shall repeat, that we must not mistake the first Impress of Ideas on the Mind, or any wild roving Fancy for Thought ; nor defer real Thinking to second Thoughts at another Time ; but, if possible, think on at once, till we have fully thought to the Purpose in Hand ; especially in Divine Contemplation. For Thought is most properly, one continu'd revolving of Ideas in the Mind, till by due Observations, and just Comparisons of Things, we bring them to a final Determination ; and we should not leave them to after Thoughts, lest we lose the principal Design, and so cannot attain to a certain Conclusion, as having disjointed them.

But

But though, on due Consideration, God's Being and Attributes appear to be self-evident, and therefore are so certain, as not to need any farther Enquiry ; yet in practical Religion, we may be too partial to our Interests in moral and social Duties ; and too indulgent to our Senses with Respect to Virtue. And therefore we must daily examine our Thoughts and Opinions of every Virtue, and every mutual social Duty. And in succeeding and distant Years, we must re-examine our Opinions in all Particulars, in Morality and Virtue, by God's revealed Laws, and by the Test of his Attributes, remembring to do, as you would be done to ; and do not, what you would not suffer to be done to you.

And as the Want of Thinking freely is the Cause of thinking erroneously, especially in Religion, we ought to divest ourselves entirely of the ensnaring and captivating Prejudice of Education ; and seriously examine every Idea that impresses our Minds ; and every receiv'd Notion that we have implicitly imbib'd, and tenaciously adher'd to : And we must be as unprejudic'd in our Thoughts, as if we were in a meer State of simple Nature, ignorant, and untaught.

And if we do not carefully do this, we can never understand our Errors, nor extricate ourselves from any wrong Notions or Opinions that we have received and imbib'd, or ill Customs that we have us'd ; but if bred Heathens or Mahometans, Jews or Papists, or in any false Tenets in Religion, we shall unavoidably continue in Error, and never come to the Knowledge of the Truth. God's Holy Spirit directs us to judge of all Things, not by our frail Reason, but by his own unerring Test of Truth, and without which, our Ideas will be imperfect and inconclusive.

The Author of a Treatise on human Understanding, has very justly confuted and exploded the pernicious Error of implicit Faith : But he leaves the Cause of Truth very indeterminate ; and the Unity and Concord of Mankind in the Truth of Religion, is left without any possible Means of attaining it ; for human Reason alone can never determine the Point, so as to accomplish it.

Human Reason, or, rather, rational Equity, and dispassionate Virtue, that is, right Reason, form'd by just Thinking, may govern our Senses in sensual Enjoyments; but too often does not: Yet it is the best Conductor in all worldly Affairs. And Equity is the moral Part of Religion, and a Safeguard to Virtue, which is the personal Part of Religion: But in the divine and spiritual Parts of Religion, which must needs be mysterious; if we do not apply to, and try our Reason by the infallible Test of Truth, our frail and fallible Reason alone, will lead us into an inextricable Labyrinth of Errors and Fallacies; and if we are under the Dominion of corrupt Sense, it will plunge and fix us in the greatest Absurdities, and most horrid Wickedness; as is evident in all false Religions in the World.

All that are able ought thus to consider; but Idiots and Lunaticks cannot think freely, because their Thoughts are confus'd, and therefore confin'd from diffusive and expatiating Thinking, as wanting natural Faculties, and not being under a rational Government; but God does not require, nor expect it from them: But they are a necessary Part of infinite Variety, and all Things tend to good: and Folly must illustrate Wisdom, as Deformity does Beauty, and Darkness Light, and so in all the gradual Degrees which are in all Things.

God requires no more of any Man, than the Faculties he gives him enables him to perform. But yet, we are not to depend on ourselves, but ought to receive Instruction; and not think (as some self-conceited or wicked Men do) that the Clergy are needless; for they are absolutely necessary, to instruct the Ignorant, &c. as God ordained, *Exod.* xxviii. 1. *John* xv. 16. *Tit.* i. 5. But we must not implicitly believe any Thing, but try all Things, *1 Thes.* v. 21, by God's Attributes, as the only infallible Test to distinguish True from false Teachers and false Doctrine, *Mat.* vii. 15, 16. *2 Pet.* ii. 1, 2, 3, 10 to 19. *Rev.* xvi. 17, 18. *2 Cor.* xi. 13, 14, 15. *Gal.* i. 7, 8. *Eph.* iv. 14, 15, 16. chap. v. 6. *Phil.* i. 10. *1 Thes.* ii. 4 to 12. *1 Tim.* i. 4 to 7. chap. iv. 1, 2, 3. chap. vi. 3, 4, 5, 10, 20, 21. *2 Tim.* ii. 16, 17, 18. chap. iii. 5, 6, 7, 13. chap. iv. 3, 4. *Tit.* i. 10, 11, 16. *2 Tim.* iv. 3, 4. *1 John* iv. 1, 7. *2 John* x. *Rev.* chap. ii. chap. iii. chap. xx.

But

But although by Free-thinking, and rationally contemplating the infinitely numerous, and gradually various Things in the Heavens, and on Earth, we may discover the Being of the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of them all; and find, that they are Evidences of his Attributes of infinite Wisdom and Power, as they are self-evident; and, by due Observation, we may see his Goodness in all Things too; yet we shall then find, that our Reason is too fallible to be farther depended upon of itself; and that no Certainty is to be found in Religion, without bringing our Reason to the infallible Test of Truth, which is God's self-evident, and incontestible Attributes; by doing which, we cannot err in Religious Truths.

But we must not neglect to use our Reason, because it is not infallible, but must use it to the utmost of our Capacity; for right Reason is form'd by a right Rule, and regular Exercise of our free Thoughts; and without a free Exertion of our Thoughts, we cannot reason rightly or justly: And then, though our Reason is not infallible, yet, by trying our Reason in all Things in Religion, by the infallible Test of Truth, which is God's Attributes, and resting upon that Test entirely, and by due Consideration of infinite Variety, our Determinations will be infallible when try'd by that unerring Test of Truth.

And let no Man complain that he wants Time for Thought and Contemplation; nor is it difficult to any Man of common Sense by it to attain to a sufficient Knowledge in Religion; and God requires nothing of any Man to know, believe, or do, that is above his Capacity. Application to Learning will soon give us Delight, and make the most difficult Things easily understood: And besides that, God has set apart one Day in seven, for our chiefest Good, by improving our Knowledge and Understanding in Divine Matters; and all Men, whose Minds are employ'd in the Study and Practice of Law or Physick, &c. may have frequent Leisure for Thoughts on Divine Subjects; and Handicrafts-Men and Labourers may think of them whilst their Hands are employ'd in their ordinary Works and Employments.

And however unwilling our sensual Inclinations may be at first, to enter into divine Contemplation; or, however disagreeable or difficult it may at first seem to us;

Practice will gradually not only make it very easy, and a very agreeable Imployment ; but will, in Time, make it the most pleasant Entertainnment of our Thoughts, and the most satisfactory Solace of our Souls ; and will give us the most rapturous Joy, and ineffable Transports of Delight.

When a Man finds, by a little Use of Contemplation, that the Pleasures of the Mind, are far greater than the Pleasures of Sense ; then, and then only, he knows what true Pleasure is : He then considers, with how many Disappointments the Pleasures of Sense are attended, how soon they vanish, and how oft they change to Pain, and end in Want and in irretrievable Misery, to his Life's End. And he finds the Pleasures of the Mind continually increase, and rise to higher Delights, and continue free from all Danger of Decay, or being lost ; but, on the contrary, he finds they will continue and daily increase during this Life ; and cannot but hope, nay, firmly believe, that they will, or may be Eternal, and never End.

But some Men, for want of rightly and daily employing their Thoughts, grow into such an indolent, stupid, implicit Temper that they are unwilling and afraid to think freely ; and overlook the repeated Commands of God to think so freely as to know rationally, and act wisely in Religion. And thus some intentionally pious, but stupidly ignorant Men, lead others into gross and impious Errors, and their Auditors, through Ignorance, fearing to offend God, do as implicitly, stupidly, and tenaciously adhere to their ignorant Teachers.

I have seen a printed Paper call'd *Old Mr. Dod's Sayings*, that are highly applauded by some well-meaning People, in which there is this gross Error, *viz. They who will see by the Eye of Faith, must shut the Eye of Reason* : But this gross Mistake was the Foundation of Heathenism, Mahometism, Popery, and the impious Error of absolute and unconditional Predestination to unavoidable and eternal Damnation, to torturing Pains of many Millions of Men, nay, of the greatest Part of Mankind, thousands of Years before they were born ; nay, by God's Predetermination, before he created the World ; and this is to paint God to be worse than the Devil, who is not unrestrain'd as God is, and can't absolutely act and do

do whatever he wills. But God did not predestinate the Devils to eternal Torment, but gave them the Use of Free-Will for their Good ; and by their ill Use of it, in Disobedience to God's Commands, for their real Happiness, they fell from their Angelick State, and became Devils. God's Fore-Knowledge does not force, or prevent Creatures Use of Free-Will ; but for the Use of it, good or ill, they must be accountable to God. Nor did God ever do, or ever will do, any Thing but what is perfectly agreeable to infinite Wisdom and Goodness : And it is impious to affirm Things done by his Power, because it is possible, though contrary to Wisdom and Goodness, to and with which Attributes, Power always acts in Concert, and in Unity, as inseparable as the Divine Essence is.

When Men impiously harden their Hearts in Wickedness, God is just in hardening them yet more for their Punishment, as *Isaiah* vi. 9 to 13. *John* xii. 37 to 40, *Mat.* xiii. 12 to 15, chap. xxv. 14 to 30 ; as in the Case of *Pharaoh*, *Exod.* iii. 7, 19 ; ver. 7, shews his harden'd Heart ; ver. 19, God's Fore-Knowledge : Chap. iv. 21, his Punishment, and explains *Rom.* chap. ix. 17. But this as well as *Esau's* Case, ver. 10, 11, 12, was temporal, as to Probation, not absolutely predestinated, tho' fore-known to God, but left to their Free-Will at first, and not forc'd but for their Punishment after they had provoked God to it by their ill Use of their Free-Will, in Disobedience of his Commands for their good, as was the Case of *Judas* : And *Mat.* xxvi. 24, is a Secret, *Mark* ix. 42, *Deut.* xxix. 29 ; and *Mal.* i. 2, 3, relates to some particular Time and Crime ; for God blessed *Esau*, *Gen.* xxvii. 38, 39, 40, and his Posterity. *Deut.* ii. 4, 5. *Job* chap. i. chap. xx. chap. xlii. and *Heb.* xii. 17, should be, *found no Way for the Redemption of his Birthright*, *Gen.* xxvii. 34 to 37 ; for he did repent, chap. xxxiii. chap. xxxv. 29, and chap. xxxvii. 1, and was blessed, *Gen.* xxvii. 38, 39, 40.

But to be more particular, the true State of God's dealing with *Pharaoh* is this ; God saw the barbarous Cruelties with which *Pharaoh* had grievously afflicted his People *Israel*, *Exod.* iii. 7 ; and he knew that *Pharaoh* had so hardened his Heart, that he would not, without very extraordinary Means, suffer them to depart from his inhuman Tyranny, ver. 19, 20 ; and that he would, and did

father oppresses them, as chap. v. and chap. vi. shews; and therefore, as he had audaciously and impiously hardened his Heart against God, chap. v. 2, God then harden'd it more, for his own, and his wicked Peoples Punishment, and to make his Power known, by punishing them with his terrible Judgments, who would not own his Wisdom and Goodness, and his Supream Being, as chap. vii. 3, 4, 5, shews. And God fore-knowing all this, does not alter the Case, for *Pharaoh* was long left to the Use of his free Will, as his Acts shew; and therefore chap. ix. 16, as ver. 17 explains it, and is to be thus understood; *I raised thee up, to be a King, and to govern* (as God did *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Dan. v. 18, 19.*) *and not to be a Tyrant to oppress Men; but then* (as he did) *exaltest thyself against my People, ver. 17, and against me too, chap. v. 2, and dost cruelly enslave them, and for this Cause I will make thee a Monument of my Fury, &c. and so greatly shew my Power in punishing thee, and thy wicked People, ver. xiii. (as God did *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Dan. iv. and chap. v. 20.) that by that Means my Name may be declared throughout all the Earth, ver. 16.* And *Rom. ix. 17,* is explained in the very same Sense, by ver. 14, to be agreeable to God's Justice, and not an arbitrary Act, and should be render'd, *I raised thee up, &c. and have long suffered thy Wickedness, ver. 22, and for which Cause I will shew my Power in punishing thee, &c.* God had endued with much long suffering, him, and other Vessels of Wickedness, deserving his Wrath and Destruction, before he shewed his Wrath; and by justly punishing them, made his Power known.*

And *Ejau's* Case will appear to be the very same, by comparing *Rom. ix. 11 to 16,* with ver. 22, 23, and with *Heb. xii. 16, 17,* and *Gen. xxv. 23 to 34,* and chap. xxvii. 1 to 41, and chap. xxxiii. 4 to 16, and chap. xxxv. 29, and chap. xxxvi. 6, 7, 8. God fore-knew that *Ejau* would be wicked, and so pre-ordain'd that his Brother should be preferred above him; and *Mal. i. 2, 3,* is not propheticall, but historical; and so should *Rom. ix. 13,* by ver. 14, 22, be understood: And *Heb. xii. 16,* mentions *Ejau's* actual Sin as the Cause of his Disinheritance; and ver. 17 should be render'd, *he found no Way for the Redemption of his Birthright,* for he did repent of his Sin, as *Gen. xxxiii.*

4 to 16, and chap. xxxv. 29, and chap. xxxvi. 6, 7, 8, shew ; and he and his Posterity were blessed, *Gen.* xxvii. 39, 40, *Deut.* ii. 22, chap. xxiii. 7 ; and *Job* and his Friends were Descendants of *Esau*, and were educated in the true Religion by *Esau*, and were blessed, as is proved by comparing *Gen.* xxxvi. and *Job* chap. i. ch. ii. and chap. xlii.

And as to Election, *Eph.* i. 9, 12. and Context shews, that Election, at ver. 4. and Predestination, ver. 11. only denote God's Fore-Knowledge of their ready Obedience to the true Faith, upon its being made known to them. All our Sufficiency is indeed of God, *Phil.* ii. 13 ; but as far as we have the Use of Free-Will, he requires us to work out our own Salvation, ver. 12, *Tit.* ii. 11, 12, 13, 14, and 1 *Pet.* chap. i. and 2 *Pet.* chap. i. to 10. *Col.* chap. iii. and 1 *Thes.* chap. i. *Tit.* i. 1. All these Texts are explain'd by the Context, to mean only God's Fore-Knowledge of Man's Obedience, and acting according to their Knowledge of the Truth ; and *Rom.* ix. 11, is the same, as ver. 14, 22, shew ; and chap. xi. 5, 7, is explain'd by ver. 6, to mean Works as well as Grace, neither of them alone, but not Works without Grace, as *Phil.* ii. 12, 13, *Mat.* xix. 28, 29, is apply'd to true Faith and good Works, and chap. xx. 23, does not appear to be by Election absolute, as is God's making some Creatures Angels, and some Men, and some Brute Animals, &c. For God prepared the greatest Honours and highest Dignities in Heaven for both Angels and Men, conditionally ; and his Fore-Knowledge, does not alter the Case, *Mat.* xii. 33 to 37. All Men are called, *Psal.* l. 1, 4. *Rom.* i. 19, 20, but such only are chosen, *Mat.* xx. 16, as obey the Faith in Truth, as the Context from ver. 1. shews ; and *Mark* xiii. 20, is explain'd by the Context ; and Christ chusing Twelve, preferable to the Rest of his Disciples, *Luke* vi. 13, left them to the Freedom of their Will, supported by God's free Grace if they would make a right Use of it ; and they were as liable to fall as *Judas* was, *John* vi. 10, and all were free to chuse the Good, and to refuse the Evil, *Isa.* vii. 15, 16, *Luke* x. 42 ; and calling and chusing are conditional to Faith and Obedience, *John* xi. 16 ; but it is of God's special Favour, that some have been brought from Ignorance or Error to the Knowledge of

of the Truth, tho' in Part all Men do know it, *Rom. i. 19, 20*, chap. x. 18, tho' not as ver. 14, 16, 17; but all shall know it, as it is in Christ *Jesus*, *John xiv. 6*, *Heb. viii. 11*, *Rev. i. 7*, *Phil. ii. 11*. And whatever is hard to be understood in the Scriptures, 2 *Per. iii. 16*, is because Men vainly depend on their Frail Reason alone, and so wrest the Scriptures, and do not try them, and their own Reason, by the Test of Truth; and some run into Error thro' Wickedness, ver. 17, and for Want of true Knowledge, ver. 18, which none can fully attain to, but by doing God's Will, in what he already knows, *John vii. 17*. But as absolute Predestination, to unavoidable Damnation is contrary to God's Attributes, so it must needs be to the Holy Scriptures, in their true Sense, which must needs be agreeable to God's Attributes. And *St. Paul* has in other Words as fully shewn, that Faith without Christian Works is dead, as *St. James* has done; and all that *St. Paul* argues against, is the ceremonial Law, and its Works, which were entirely abolish'd by Christ, who requires Christian Works in their Stead, as a Proof of their Faith, *Mat. v. 16*, *John vi. 28, 29*, and *Rom. iii. 20*, chap. ix. 32, 1 *Cor. iii. 13, 15*, *Gal. ii. 16*, chap. v. 6, 19, chap. vi. 4, *Eph. ii. 9, 10*, *Col. i. 10*, 2 *Thes. ii. 17*, 1 *Tim. ii. 10*, chap. v. 10, 25, chap. vi. 18, *Tit. ii. 7, 14*, chap. iii. 1, 2, 14, *Heb. vi. 10, 11, 12*, chap. x. 24, chap. xiii. 21; not that we can plead Merit, *Tit. iii. 5, 6, 7*, *Phil. ii. 13*, but if we do our Part, ver. 12, God will reward us, and all Men, according to their Works, *Rom. ii. 6*; but as our Deficiency is great, our chief and only real Claim, is Christ's alone Merits.

By the many Texts of *St. Paul's*, which by God's Attributes must be understood, do fully explain what he saith, of Faith without Works, to mean only the Works of the Typical Law, and the Ceremonials attending it; and that he, as well as *Abraham*, proved his Faith, as *St. James* saith, chap. ii. 21, 22, and which, though he claimed no Merit, yet God was pleas'd to reward, *Gen. xxvi. 3, 4, 5*.

But the grand and most pernicious Error of all, and to which absolute Predestination is attach'd, is asserting eternal Punishment to be eternal Torment, contrary to the whole Tenour of Scripture; and to those particular
 Texts,

Texts, on which they build that Tenet, if rightly consider'd, in their genuine Sense, which is easily known, by comparing them with other Texts, and trying them and our own Reason by God's Attributes, as the only unerring Test of Truth.

As a Doctrine so contrary to God's Attributes is not really and stedfastly believed, but by a few Ignorants, if by any Men, or not without irresolute fluctuating Thoughts, now dissident, then flattering and continually varying ; it is the Cause of Atheism, Deism, and Infidelity, and makes Men either believe nothing of Religion, or but what suits their Vices, Passions, Appetites, or Vanities ; and they willingly think that God is like themselves, *Psal. l. 21.*

To confute this Error, it is sufficient, to an impartial Man, to say, that it is contrary to God's self-evident Attributes ; but, with Respect to prejudic'd Opinions, it is necessary to add, that it is contrary to the true Sense of Scripture, try'd by that infallible Test of Truth. It might be objected, that the Word *Everlasting* does not always mean Eternally ; but in many Instances signifies a long Period of Time, the End of which is not known to us till the Expiration of its Term. And the Continuance of it is sometimes conditional, though but tacitly imply'd, as in *Phineas's* Priesthood, *Num. xxv. 11, 12, 13,* as the Event shews, *1 Sam. ii. 27 to 36.* But everlasting Punishment seems to be consequential to enormous Guilt, incorrigible and final Impenitence ; and agreeable to a just Balance, in rewarding all according to their Works, *Mat. xvi. 27 ;* and of which, as consequential, Man's State in this Life is an Emblem ; for if a Man ruins his Health, Wealth, or good Fame, it is hardly possible for him to repair, retrieve, or regain what he has destroy'd, wasted, or lost ; and *Mat. xxv. 46,* asserts everlasting Punishment, and to be as *Dan. xii. 2.*

As to eternal Torments, some Men say, that not to take *Mat. xxv. 41,* and *Mark ix. 43 to 48,* in an express literal Sense, is to say, that Christ prevaricated, and said one Thing, and meant another. But that can't be truly alledged, for it is a forc'd Construction of the Words, contrary to God's Attributes, and to other Texts of Scripture, to say, that those Words, *depart, or go into even I*
Fire,

Fire, or to suffer its Vengeance, Jude vii. must needs mean to continue in it to all Eternity. It might be as well affirmed, that a Man sent to a Prison, and to suffer the Scourge there, must never have any Release ; or that *Job* x. 21, chap. xvi. 22, chap. vii. 9, *contra* ver. 10, and chap. xix. 25, 26, 27, means no Resurrection. But Christ's true Sense is plain, *viz.* That final Impenitents shall go there to have their due Portion of Torment, *Mat.* xxiv. 51, *Rev.* xxi. 8, and not be released till they have paid the utmost Mite, chap. v. 25, 26, chap. xviii. 34, 35 : And *Mark* ix. ver. 42, 49, 50, shews, that ver. 43 to 48, is not meant that they shall eternally suffer the unquenchable Fire, or the never dying Worm ; but shews, that they cannot quench the Fire, nor escape from it, or from the Worm of Conscience, till God shall please to release them ; but must endure it, till their Works are thoroughly try'd, *1 Cor.* iii. 13, 14, 15, and that God's Providence has its final End, chap. xv. 24 to 28, when the last Enemy, ver. 26, the second Death, *Rev.* xxi. 8, is destroy'd, and which is the final End of the Torment, to which the fallen Angels are reserv'd and condemn'd, *Jude* vi. and Men too, ver. 7 ; which final Sentence they shall receive at the last Judgment of this World ; and *Rev.* xx. 10, chap. xiv. 11, by the Term Day and Night shews, that ever and ever does not mean eternally, but a long, and to us unknown Series of Time ; which is far more grievous than a Term of Time, however long, can be, whose Duration is known ; and when released from Torment, an Endless Punishment continues, *Mat.* xxv. 46, in being plac'd in a contemptible State, *Dan.* xii. 2, compar'd with the endless Honours and Happiness of the blessed Saints (and unfallen Angels too) *Rom.* ii. 7, 8, 9. It is true Christ took not on him the Nature of Angels, *Heb.* ii. 16, but he took their Office upon him, as many Texts shew : *Gen.* chap. ii. is the same as chap. xviii. &c. ; and if their Torments were never to end, would God admit these Sons of Darkness in his Presence with his Sons of Light, *Job* i. 6, or converse with them, ver. 7 to 12, ch. ii. 1 to 6, *Mat.* iv. 1 to 11, or grant any of their Requests, chap. viii. 31, 32, or not quite divest them of all Dignity and Power, *John* xiv. 30, *Eph.* ii. 2, chap. vi. 12, *Rev.* ix. 11, or give them any Intervals of Liberty from their Con-

Confinement, or any Alleviation of Torment, or Reprieve; as seems to be imply'd in *Job*, chap. i. chap. ii. *Mat.* viii. 29, *Psalm* vi. *Rev.* xx. 1 to 7.

But God in his own due Time, will destroy their Power, *Heb.* ii. 14, 15, and Death also, *1 Cor.* xv. 24 to 28; and ver. 26, the last Enemy is the second Death, *Rev.* xx. 14; and that is to be, when both the Devils and damned Men shall have had their Portion in it, chap. xxi. 8, and have paid the utmost Mite, *Mat.* v. 26, chap. xviii. 34, 35, is represented as God's dealing with Men; or till Mercy shall triumph over Judgment, *James* iii. 13, *Rom.* xi. 32, *Col.* ii. 15, and *Mat.* xii. 32; and *Rev.* xxi. 1 to 7, implies a Sort of Forgiveness in the World to come.

But neither these Texts, nor *1 Pet.* iii. 19, nor any other Text give any Pretence for a Purgatory distinct from Hell, nor for praying for the Dead; much less, to make a vast Gain of it. For that is the vile Pretence of incarnate Devils, *Rev.* xviii. 23, 24, and whole Chapter, and chap. xix. 20, and *2 Thes.* ii. 3 to 12, *1 Tim.* iv. 1, 2, 3, and by which many Nations, are so deceiv'd, seduced, and infatuated, as to believe, that be they never so wicked, or if they gain many Thousand Pounds, by open Robbery or secret Fraud, and at last give a few Hundred Pounds to a Priest (or less in Proportion to the Case) to pray for them, or to absolve them, they shall either escape Purgatory, or be soon released from it, and fly to Heaven, and never be cast into Hell Torments; being deluded by Priests, and deluding themselves, to Hell, by implicitly believing Lies, *2 Thes.* ii. 10, 11, 12. We cannot help wishing and hoping well of deceas'd Friends, but secret Things belong to God, *Deut.* xxix. 29; and let us not do above what is written, *1 Cor.* iv. 5, 6; for that is presumptuous Supererogation. But Temporal Gain is all that some Priests mean by Godliness, *1 Tim.* vi. 5; and Godliness with Content in a competent State they like not. They seduce Men; and Men are too willingly seduced by them, to their Damnation, *Mark* xiii. 21, 22, 23, *1 John* ii. 24, 26, *Rev.* ii. 20, *1 Tim.* iv. 1, *2 Tim.* iii. 13.

Dives shewed a reclaim'd and loving Temper, *Luke* xvi. 27, 28, 30; and that his Request was not granted in that Particular, was because it was not necessary, ver. 29, 31; and his Request, ver. 23 to 26, was too soon ask'd: And as ver. 31 is answered, the same Answer may be given for Man's future State: If the fear of suffering eternal Punishment, will not reclaim them, neither will the Doctrine of eternal Torment do it; because, as it cannot be true, it cannot have so forcible an Effect as Truth; but secret Disbelief of it, flatters Men in Unbelief of the Truth, and makes them presumptuous and to be harden'd in Wickedness.

But if Men sincerely believed, the rewarding all Men according to their Works; and that as our future State is Eternal, so must our Rewards and Punishments be Torments long and insuperable, and Punishments very great, eternally, *Rom.* ii. 6 to 11, *Mat.* xxv. 46, *Dan.* xii. 2, were this Truth sincerely believ'd, they would not presumptuously sin, vainly imagining that Grace will abound, *Rom.* vi. 1; for such Presumption deludes Men into the most enormous Crimes, and for which they must suffer the greatest and longest Torments, and the most contemptible State for ever, *Heb.* x. 26 to 31. And if these Terrors will not deter Men from Sin, 2 *Cor.* v. 10, 11, nothing will do it; nor can the Threats of eternal Torments do it, as not being Truth.

In affirming that Error, Dr. *Lucas* justly said, that Men affirm Things of God, which if a Man should do, he ought to suffer the most torturing Death; or if a City could be guilty of it; it ought to be rased to the Ground, and its Memorial to perish.

That there shall be a Release from Torment, and from Confinement to Hell, seems plain by *Isaiah* xlii. 7, chap. lxi. 1, 2, 3, *Luke* iv. 18, 19, *Heb.* ii. 14, 15, 1 *Pet.* iii. 19; which Preaching and its Effects, *Luke* iv. 19, must needs be more extensive both as to Time, and Place, than in this Life; and so not only be, as 2 *Tim.* ii. 26, for that falls short of Christ's Eternal Office, 1 *Cor.* xv. 24 to 28, *Rev.* xxi. 1 to 8: But by *Mat.* xvi. 27: Men will be gradually delivered from the second Death, according to their Time of Life from the Creation to the End of the World.

Let

Let us suppose it the Case of a proud rich Man, that all the Time of this Life (which at the longest Period, is as Nothing to Eternity) should most inhumanly enslave all, and especially his meanest Servant, and make Cruelty his Delight; and that after his Body's Death, his Soul should be tormented in Hell, and his poor Servant's Soul enjoy the Happiness of Heaven, till the Resurrection, and final Judgment; and that to all Eternity, he should be advanced high in Honour, as well as Happiness, and that his cruel and unjust Master, after Release from his long Torment, of both Soul and Body, in the Second Death; should be doom'd to be his former Slave's, meanest Servant to all Eternity, whom he had enslav'd in this short Life: Would not this be a contemptible State, and be a much greater Punishment to a proud Man, and one who had lived in State, and Grandure, than to a mean Person that had been us'd to some Hardships in this Life? and if this State of the Case, of a Punishment eternal, and so contemptible, will not reclaim Men from Wickedness, as *Luke* xvi. 31; that Doctrine which must needs give us Notions of God, contrary to his Holy Attributes cannot do it; but as being disbeliev'd, will harden Men in Sin, or if believed, by having most unworthy Thoughts of God, *Psalms* l. 21.

And as God made Man in his own Image, and requires us to be as like him as we can, *1 Pet.* i. 15, 16, 17, what should we think of a mighty terrestrial King, that was fam'd to excel all others in Wisdom, Goodness, and Mercy, and who had an unlimited Power to do whatever he pleas'd, and a Fore-sight of Things future, and so could order all Things for the best, and prevent all Evil to himself and to his Subjects: And let us suppose him to have advanced from nothing, one to be one of his chief Ministers of State, and to have made him *Vice Roy* of a great Province, in his vast Dominions; fore-knowing that he would rebel against him, and excite the whole Province to joyn in the Rebellion, intending to usurp the whole Dominion to himself: But his Attempt being fore-known and suppress'd, he and all the Province, suffer'd some immediate Punishment; their Condition was chang'd, and they were driven from the Province, to a less and worse Province, in which was at that Time only

an inferior Minister of State, but who was to people the Province by his Children and Posterity, and to govern them ; and the grand Delinquent being enraged at his Disappointment, and being exil'd from his first Province, but being left at large in this lesser Province (though not to govern) and he growing malicious, deluded the Man, who was to live in, and to govern the Province, when peopled, to disobey the King's Orders, for which he also was driven to a worse Province, and his Nature chang'd from good to evil, and all his Posterity was, of natural Consequence, of the same corrupt Nature, for which they were to suffer some present Hardships, and be in Danger of the same future Punishment to which the first Transgressors were reserved, and said by some Men to be a perpetual Torment, without Interval or Alleviation, during a long Life, and which rather prolonged than shorten'd it, in a Country where they all lived to an extream old Age. The King had Abundance of good and faithful Servants, and needed not the Delinquent's Service ; and when he had taken them into his Service, he could have put the first Rebel to Death, and prevented his seducing the second ; or by putting him to Death, have prevented the Evil that his Posterity were involv'd in.

The King had, indeed, provided a Remedy that would effectually cure the infecting Disease ; but (as some Men say) though he knew that but few of them that knew it would make use of it ; and that the greatest Part of them could not possibly know it, yet he put them all to the Torture that did not make Use of it : But can a wise and good King do thus by his Subjects ? Surely no : How then can we think, that an infinitely Wise and Good God will do it, contrary to his Attributes, and to *Rom. x. 14, Eph. iii. 5 to 11, Isaiah xlv. 23, Rom. xiv. 11, Rev. i. 7, Phil. ii. 10, 11, Acts iii. 21, Col. i. 20, Eph. i. 10, 1 Cor. xv. 28, and Mat. xxiii. 29* ; and contrary to all the Texts alledged for eternal Torment, taken with their Contexts, in their proper Sense, agreeable to God's Attributes.

Origen was very presumptuous, to limit God's Judgments to a thousand Years : The Body as well as the Soul, *Mat. x. 28*, may endure the second Death, many thou-

thousand Years, and then live in a contemptible State to all Eternity, and if these Terrors of the Lord will not persuade Men, 2 *Cor.* v. 10, 11, that which is contrary to God's Attributes, cannot do it : But let none be presumptuous, 1 *Cor.* x. 12, for many Men who they condemn shall be called to God's Kingdom, when they shall be cast out, *Mat.* viii. 11, 12.

Notwithstanding what I have said, I know it will be still objected, that as Men secretly disbelieve eternal Torment, so they will disbelieve eternal Punishment, and say, Why may not *Mat.* xxv. 46, be meant, as in *Phineas's* Case, a long Series of Time, and conditional too, and not in the strict Sense of the Word *Everlasting* : And that it is not agreeable to God's Wisdom and Goodness, to make Creatures that he had no Need of ; foreknowing that they would so offend his Eternal Infinite Majesty, as in Justice to condemn them to long Torments, and to punish them eternally ? To which I answer, That what I have said, and shall occasionally mention, of the Necessity of infinite Variety, and the necessary Use of Free-Will, is sufficient to answer the Objection : But I shall add, as a Part of infinite Variety, that an Equality in Heaven would no more give us right and true Ideas of Happiness, than upon Earth. And as Men on Earth, through Idleness, keep themselves poor, or by Profuseness, make themselves so, or by Avarice, will not enjoy what they possess ; so in Heaven all being rewarded according to their Works, there will be many Ranks and Degrees of Men, as well as there is of Angels, *Eph.* i. 21, chap. iii. 40, 1 *Thes.* iv. 16, as is described *Psal.* lxxxiv. 10, *Mat.* v. 19, chap. xi. 11, chap. xix. 28, 29, and *Rev.* i. 6 : But when Christ shall have given Deliverance to the Prisoners, *Luke* iv. 18, and have led the Captives from Captivity, *Eph.* iv. 8, 9, 10 ; and as he has both descended to Hell, and ascended to Heaven to fill all Things, chap. i. 10, and when he shall have gathered together all Things in Heaven, and Earth, and Hell, *Rev.* xx. 13, 14, 1 *Cor.* xxii. to 28, then the Door-keepers, or lowest Stations, shall be content, and so be happy, as well as those that dwell in magnificent Pavilions or Palaces, *Psal.* lxxxiv. 10, or in any of the various Mansions of Heaven, *John* xv. 2, 3, and will be always praising God,

God, *Pſalm* lxxxiv. 4, and bleſs Chriſt their Deliverer, *Mat.* xxiii. 39, and thankfully ſay, *Hefanna in the high-eſt*, *Mat.* xxi. 9 ; and as being free from Pain, will be happy in a low Degree ; for God made all Things very good, *Gen.* i. 31, and to work together for good, *Rom.* viii. 28 ; and they will love much to whom much is forgiven, or that are deliver'd from Torment, *Luke* vii. ver. 47, *Mat.* chap. xii. ver. 32 ; and all *Iſrael*, and the *Gentiles* ſhall be ſaved, or redeemed, or delivered, *Luke* iv. 18, *Rom.* x. 12, chap. xi. 26 to 36 ; and this cannot be meant in one Age, or in a few Ages only, but as *Rev.* i. 7, *Acts* iii. 21, *Eph.* i. 10, *Coloſ.* i. 20, and *Phil.* ii. 10. 11 : But if God's Mercy, being over all his Works, *Pſalm* cxlv. 9, *Rom.* xi. 32, ſhall make Men ſin that Grace may abound, chap. vi. 1, let them conſider the long and dreadful Torments due to Preſumption and Impenitence, chap. ii. 9, *Heb.* x. 26 to 31, *Mat.* xxv. 30, 41, 46, *Mark* ix. 43 to 49, *Rev.* xxi. 8, and not only long and dreadful Torments, but a contemptible State for ever, *Dan.* xii. 2, compared with the Bleſſed, and their eternal State of Honour and Happineſs, *Rom.* ii. 7, *Mat.* xxv. 34, chap. xix. 28, 29, *Rev.* i. 6 : But if we love God above all Things, as he is our chief Good, that perfect Love will caſt off all Fear, prevent Torment, and ſecure our eternal Happineſs, *Mat.* xxii. 57, 59, 1 *John* iv. 18 to 21.

What vaſt Volumes have been written upon this Subject, and on Predeſtination and Free-Will, in which they often puzzle the Cauſe, and always make one Aſſertion expreſſly contradict the other ; when the Caſe is ſo plain, as that God's Predeſtination is abſolute, in decreeing that ſome Creatures, and which of them ſhall be Angels or Men, &c. and his Predeſtination, with Reſpect to their Free-Will, is conditional, and to be rewarded or puniſhed according to their good or ill Uſe of it, *Gen.* ii. 16, 17. but with a Reſerve of Mercy to true Penitence and Faith in Chriſt's Merits. But God's Goodneſs, Juſtice, and Mercy, leave no Room for Preſumption, as his Judgments muſt needs be very terrible ; and who ſhall dare to offend an Omnipotent God, that Grace may abound, and he find Impunity.

And

And to that ignorantly applauded Saying of Mr. *Dod*, I will answer, by Way of Incalcation, of the one Thing needful, That we must employ and improve our Reason, in all Things to the utmost, but we must not absolutely depend upon our Reason alone in Religion, but humbly apply it to the unerring Test of Truth, God's Holy Attributes, in which only Infallibility is to be found, and safely and entirely to be depended on.

As God is a pure spiritual Being, he must needs be invisible to our elemental Eyes. But he has appeal'd to his Works, as Proofs of his Being, and of his Attributes of infinite Wisdom, Power, Goodness, and Glory, &c. And he has appealed to Man for Witness of his Attributes, by his due Consideration of his wondrous Works, and by the internal Witness that he finds in himself; his Understanding, Will, and Act, and his Memory to register all his Thoughts, Words, and Works. And God has appealed even to Man's Senses, for Evidences of his Beneficence: By all which he finds self-evident Proofs of God's Being, &c. *The Heavens declare the Glory of God, Psalm viii. Psalm xix. 1 to 6; and the Earth and Sea are full of his wondrous Works, Psalm civ. Psalm xxxiii. 4 to 9, Psalm lxxix. 5 to 16, Psalm xlvii. 1 to 6, Psalm cxlviii. Job chap. xxxviii. chap. xxxix. chap. xli. and chap. xlii.* And Man finds that God has made him wonderfully, awfully, and fearfully, *Psalm cxxxix. 14;* and made all Creatures on Earth subject to him, and for his Use, *Psalm viii. 6, &c.* And God has allow'd, nay, commanded us to seek him, and by all possible Means to find him, and to know him aright, and to try him and his Truth, *Psalm cv. 4, Deut. iv. 29, Isaiah viii. 1 to 9, chap. xxviii. 16, chap. xliii. 10, chap. xli. 20, chap. xlv. 8, and ver. 1 to 11, Psalm xviii. 30, Exod. xvi. 6, 7, 8, chap. xiv. 12, 13, Numb. xi. 21, 22, 23, Psalm xxxiv. 8, Acts xvii. 27, 28, 29, 1 Kings viii. 27, Deut. xxxiii. 27, Isaiah lvi. 15, chap. lx. 15;* and that we should search, examine, and try all Things that relate to Religion, *John v. 39, 1 John iv. 1, 1 Thes. v. 21, Acts xiii. 11, 12, Rev. ii. 2, 7,* that we may by that Means distinguish Truth from Error, *Luke xii. 57,* and so prove what is the true Faith, and what we ought to do to obtain eternal happy Life: And to examine ourselves whether we are in the
true

true Faith, *2 Cor.* xiii. 5, and do shew it by our Words and Works, *James* ii. 20, and to examine whether those who call themselves Apostles and Ministers of Christ, are true or false Apostles and Ministers, *2 Cor.* xi. 13, 14, 15; whether of Christ's true Church, or of the Synagogue of Satan, *Rev.* ii. 9, who lie in wait to deceive us, *Eph.* iv. 14, by telling us that we must implicitly believe whatever they say, that by that Means they may subject us to their Tyranny and Oppression.

And if we carefully and studiously muse upon all God's Works, *Psal.* cxliii. 5, and seriously consider them, *Psal.* viii. *Psal.* xix. 1 to 6, and *Psal.* civ. we may, by seeking, feel and find God, *Psal.* cv. 4, 5, *Acts* xvii. 27, 28, and so avoid Idolatry and Error, ver. 29, chap. xiv. 17, *Rom.* i. 19, 20, &c. For though we cannot in this Life see God, yet we can perceive his Being, by our Senses, if we apply them to right Rules of Reason; and by contemplating God's wondrous Works, which clearly discover his Attributes; for the Marks of Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, are impress'd in, and upon all and each Thing; and by whose glorious and benign Attributes, his holy Will and Laws are demonstrated to be revealed to us, and by his Attributes may be rightly understood, *Psal.* xix. 7 to 11, that is, if we apply ourselves, by the Practice of them, *John* vii. 17, to true divine Wisdom, *Psal.* xc. 12 to 17; and without which, Man cannot, by his own Reason, understand his Errors, *Psal.* xix. 12, as not being infallible; but thinks rashly, mistakenly, and inconclusively; or, rather, his Imaginations are vain, and indeterminate, for Want of Thinking; for nothing can properly be called Thought, that does not proceed to a final and just Determination.

But searching the Scriptures, *John* v. 39, is not barely looking for particular Texts, and remembering them, but practising them, *Luke* viii. 15; and in all Things difficult to understand, *2 Pet.* iii. 16. Searching is to compare one Text with another, and considering them by natural Philosophy, and taking them in such Sense, as is perfectly agreeable to the Attributes of God, and in nothing contrary to them; or to make one Attribute contradict another; and as some Texts are the Dictates of the Holy Spirit, and some the Sayings of Men, both good
and

and bad ; and ſome of them the Speeches of Devils ; and ſome of theſe true, *Mat.* iv. 6, *Mark* i. 24, and ſome falſe, *Gen.* iii. 4, *Job* i. 11, &c. we muſt ſearch or ſift the Wheat from the Chaff and Bran, *Jer.* xxiii. 25 to 32, and diſtinguiſh the Tares from the Wheat, though we may not take them quite away, *Mat.* xiii. 24 to 30, but leave them for the Exerciſe of others Search, Examination, Tryal, and Judgment, to approve and imitate, or condemn, *1 Theſ.* v. 21, *Luke* xii. 57, which any Man of common Sente may do, *John* vii. 24, if he apply and try his Reaſon by the infallible Teſt of God's Attributes ; and if he judges without theſe, and contrary to them, he will be ſelf-condemned, *Rom.* ix. 2, and ſuffer for it, *1 Cor.* iii. 15.

But without free and expatiate Thinking, and ſerious and ſedate Contemplation, and due Conſideration of the Scriptures, and of God's Works and Creatures, and applying all to God's Attributes ; Man's fallible Reaſon, ſway'd by Senſe, can make no true and impartial Judgment in Religion.

We ſee all the Particulars, of infinite gradual Variety, runs through all Things, viſible in the Heavens, as well as on, and in the Earth and Seas : Each luminous Orb, and each opake Orb in the Heavens, differ in Luſtre, and Magnitude ; and the opake Orbs are differently illuminated, more or leſs, by the ſolar, lunar, and ſtellate Orbs.

And there is a gradual Difference, in animal and vegetive Natures, and in Mines, Minerals, and Fossils, in aqueous Subſtances, and Stratas of Earth, and of Stones, from the brighteſt Diamond to the coarſeſt Pebble ; and in Creatures or Things, of the ſame Kind, or Sort, two indifcriminate Equals can't be found, but ſome Difference in Beauty or Goodneſs will appear.

And this infinite, gradual Variety, leads us gradually from Things of the leaſt Perfection, to infinite, abſolute, ultimate, and conſummate Perfection ; and ſhews, that it is ſelf-evident in God : And without which Fountain of all Perfection, no finite Perfection could be. And what is called Imperfection, is neceſſary to illuſtrate Perfection ; and to give us a right and true Idea of it, from the leaſt, to the greateſt, and higheſt Degree of Perfection : And to give us a juſt Eſtimate of each Thing in

Nature, by supplying in us, the want of essential, innate Ideas, which God only has, or can have.

And the innumerable Sorts of Vegetives, which the Earth produces ; and as all Animals are Earth ; and all spontaneous Productions demonstrate, that they all proceed from one Thing, or from a Composition of three Elements in one Body ; and as elemental Bodies are Spirit condens'd, and can be rarify'd to Spirit ; it is absurd to imagine that the universal created Spirit was made of nothing.

God's Works, are indeed incontestible Evidences of his Being, and Attributes, and demonstrate them to be self-evident ; and the only sure Way to arrive at perfect Knowledge, in created Things, is to begin with the least, or least important Things, and gradually to proceed to the greatest, or most excellent Things in Nature, by free expatiate Thinking.

But in Order to discover the Being of God, though we may by the Consideration of his Works discover it, yet the shortest, clearest, and most incontestible Proof of it, will arise from, neither the least, nor the greatest Thing, nor any Thing in Being, but with the Term *Nothing*, as the most obvious, and most certain Way to discover Being, and to find it to be of eternal Existence ; or to be satisfy'd in the Source of our own Being. And then we must proceed to the gradual Enquiry, as corroborative Evidence.

The shortest, plainest, and most certain Proofs of the Being of a G O D.

First, **W**E must consider, that the Term *Nothing*, is a Non-Entity, and a meer Word of Distinction, between what our Senses do, or do not perceive : And as *Nothing* never had, so it never can have any Being ; nor can give Being to any Thing : Nor can any Being be deriv'd of or proceed from *Nothing*.

From

From which Consideration, it is incontestibly evident, that some Being must be self-existent, and ever have existed, without Beginning, and therefore ever will exist, without End ; which we understand by the Term Eternal, and the endless Time of his Duration, by Eternity.

And hence it is self-evident, that the Eternal Being, is self-existent, self-sufficient, all-sufficient, independent, most perfect, immutable, immarcescible, undefilable, and immortal.

Secondly, If I form an Idea of as large a Circle as my Imagination can stretch, I can't help having a succeeding Idea, that such a vast Circle is not boundless, but that something is beyond, and round about it, and this proves Place to be boundless, which is call'd Immenfity: And immense Place is certainly a more proper Term than Space, as it gives a better Idea of a Substantive, and Space of an Adjective ; and it is more agreeable to Scripture, which calls Immenfity God's Place, and Throne, and Habitation. *Ezek. iii. 12, Psalm xviii. 11, Psalm xxvi. 8, Psalm xxxiii. 13, 14, Psalm xci. 1, Psalm cxix. 144, Mich. i. 3, John xiv. 2, 3, 1 Kings viii. 27, Isaiah lxvi. 1* ; all these Texts shew, that Immenfity is an immense Place, containing all finite Places, and Interfpaces. And Space is but a Term to denote Distances between finite Places ; and Place is a Term, as proper to Spirits, and spiritual Beings and Things, as to Elements and elemental Natures ; and Space is us'd in Scripture in a passive Sense only, *Gen. xxxii. 16, Job. iii. 4, 1 Sam. xxvi. 13* ; and it is us'd with Respect to Time, as well as Place, *Deut. ii. 14, Ezra ix. 8*, and as a Subject to both ; and both Place and Space are possessed by God's essential Presence ; and not potentially only, for that makes God a meer Phantom.

And if his Essence were not immense, his Power cou'd not be infinite : But his Essence is uncontaminate, and undefilable, as the Sun's Beams, when shining upon a polluted Substance : Or as the Air which is a pure created Spirit, existing throughout Immenfity, and every where equally pure, and is not defil'd or hurt by any Infalubrity, or noxious Qualities that are in gross Atmospheres, or by Putrifactions on the Earth, or in its Bow-

els, or by any Thing that is destructive to animal, or vegetative Natures: For the Air is as pure in any of those Places, as in the Celestial Serenity of the Heavens.

And as God is the most perfect, and most substantial of all Beings, he must needs fill Immensity with the real Substance of his Essence, *Jer.* xxiii. 24, and so must be essentially immense, and therefore incomprehensible, though sufficiently known to spiritual and rational Beings; for he is the Center of each Thing, as well as the boundless Circumference of all Things, comprehending all, and therefore is most certainly and really, essentially and substantially (extending to all, but not extended by any Thing, but is) ever omnipresent, every where, in all and each Place and Space in and throughout Immensity: And the common and uniform Order, and steady Government, of all the infinite Variety, of fixed and changeable Things, proves his Omniscience, and his Prescience, and Preordination, and his irresistible Will, and omnipotent *Fiat*, and uncontrollable Power; and demonstrates, that there can be but one supream Being, and sovereign Lord of all.

And as an incontestible Note of consummate and ultimate Perfection, and as there is not, nor can be any Equality; there can be but one self-existent Being, who can have no Equal, which Being we call God.

Without infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, which implies infinite Perfection, there could be no finite Perfection, nor Degrees of Wisdom, Power, and Goodness: Nor could any true Estimate be made of infinite, absolute, or superlative Perfection, but by gradual Degrees of Perfection, which by Graduality, must needs proceed to Contraries, or seeming Imperfections; but which do illustrate ultimate Perfection; and give us a true Idea, and just Estimate of its superlative Excellence, and of all gradual Degrees of it. And there could be no Degrees of Perfection, but from infinite Perfection; nor Being, without a self-existent Being.

But the Being of one Sovereign Lord, over all created Beings, is not inconsistent with a Triad of Substances, in the essential Unity of the Deity, as is demonstrable in the Works of Creation, as I shall more particularly prove in due Place.

God

God is eternal, not Eternity ; immense, not Immenfity ; and as immutable, and ever active and productive, he is an eternal Creator ; and not of nothing, nor of his Effence ; but of the prolifick Effluvia of his Effence, he eternally created Eternity and Immenfity, as neceffary to all Being ; and they are real, though paffive Beings, and are not of themfelves ; but God, the fole Cause of all Things, eternally made them neceffarily, coeval with himfelf.

And to imagine, becaufe our folar Syftem of Planets, of which our Terraqueous Orb is one, is not fix thoufand Years old ; that God was ever alone, and did not eternally act, product, and create, is to fuppofe him to have been for a long Time imperfect : For the Term before Creation, denotes prior Time, and Eternity is eternal Time.

The invifible Spirit within us, which is our animal Life, and the intellectual Spirit in us, which perceptibly moves us to think, and to will, to fpeak and act ; and the invifible Acts perceived from without our Bodies, demonftrate, That there may be Natures confifting of Bodies purely fpiritual, 1 Cor. xv. 44, and that can fubfift and act without elemental Bodies, and with more Freedom, Agility, and Perfection. And fuch Beings we call Angels, which were certainly created before our folar Syftem, Job xxxviii. 4, 7 : And though their Agility and Velocity is with the utmoft Freedom, yet they have Habitations, Jude vi. 2 Pet. ii. 4, as well as Birds of the Air.

As God is infinite, his Habitation is Immenfity ; but as Creatures are finite, they muft needs have ftated Habitations fuitable to their Natures : And doubtlefs, all the innumerable Orbs in Immenfity, as well as our terraqueous Orb, are Habitations for various Sorts of Creatures rational and irrational, &c.

And if God had not eternally created, he muft have been long unprolifick, indolent, and unactive, or impotent, and not *semper idem*, and ever of the fame ultimate Perfection, and prolifick Energy, productive Power, and efficient Efficacy ; or wanting Wifdom to defign, and Will to exert his effufive and diffufive Goodnefs. All Things are of God, not of his Effence, nor of meer
nothing

nothing, nor by his Power alone ; but of the external Effluvia of his prolifick Essence, effluated or out-breathed, *Psalms* xxxiii. 6.

Beings that are invisible to human Sight, are certainly visible to some Sort of Natures ; and are, by their Effects, as demonstrable, and certain, to our Understanding, as visible Objects are to our Sight ; a Witness of which we find within ourselves, in that which thinks, directs, and moves us in Act : And an essential spiritual Light, is more evident to us, than the Light of the Sun is to a Man that is born blind, and more reasonable to believe.

And as a proper Distinction, we call invisible, active Beings, Spirits, or Spiritual Natures ; and Things visible and tangible, we call Elements, or of elemental Natures ; and Air is not Wind, and is not visible, nor tangible, but is an invisible Spirit known only by its Effects.

Atheists acknowledge that there is a universal Spirit, and they may be many Ways informed, that there are finite Spirits innumerable, of various Dimensions, Quantities, and Qualities ; and that Spirits can, and do exist, and are subsisted as well, nay, better, when free from elemental or animal Bodies, than when imbody'd in them : And thus when our elemental Bodies are rarify'd to Spirit, and reunited with our Souls, our whole Man will be one entire spiritual Body, and be incomparably more perfect and happy than we are, or can be, in this Life, whilst our spiritual Souls are inclosed, and obscur'd in our elemental Bodies, *1 Cor.* xv. 40, 44.

But gross Mistakes are made, by misnaming Things, and by misunderstanding or misapplying of School Terms.

Time is eternal, as well as periodical ; and there is an Eternity of Time, which is God's endless Time, as well as Periods of Time throughout Eternity, which relate to his Acts, Works, and Creatures. *Rev.* x. 6, means only with Respect to this present World ; but new Creations imply new Era's of Time, *Isaiah* lxv. 17, chap. lxvi. 22, *2 Pet.* iii. 13, *Rev.* xxi. 1.

Essence is the spiritual Substance, Life, and Soul of every Thing, and in chief is the Being of each Thing, or the Principle of its Being, and is the whole Being of a spiritual Substance or Body, or spiritual Nature that is entirely spiritual.

And

And Essence and Spirit are, in some Respects, synonymous Terms ; for Essence is Spirit, but all Spirits are not Essences, but of a lower Degree ; but without Spirit, Elements are dead and unactive ; and it is Spirit that vivifies and actuates them ; and when Spirit is withdrawn, or unactive in Elements, they, of their own Nature, die, but may be revived by Spirit.

Substance is the different Matter and Manner of each Thing in Being, of whatever Nature spiritual or elemental. And the Term *incorporeal* is a meer Phantom ; for Matter and Body are Terms necessary to denote Beings spiritual as well as elemental, *Col. ii. 9.*

Essential Substance is spiritual Matter, and spiritual Matter has a thinking Quality ; and fix'd spiritual Bodies are the most permanent, and most perfect Matter, as not being compos'd of Parts, though the Whole of each created Spirit has Dimensions greater or less in Proportion, as God has form'd them, but are entire and inseparable, as more or less pure, and are most material and solid Substances, and so are most permanent.

Vacuum of Element is *Plenum* of Spirit ; and *Vacuum*, is but a Word of Distinction, as the Term *nothing* is : The Air (or rather Wind) Pump is no Proof of a *Vacuum*, as has been demonstrated, and will appear in the *Second Part* of this *Essay* : And *immaterial*, is a nothing or little material ; and what is erroneously call'd *immaterial*, is most material : And thus Spirit is a Body of most pure Matter, (contrary to Corruption) and so is the most solid Substance ; and as being without Parts and indivisible in God, *Col. ii. 9* : And it is without Mixture in some created Spirits, though as being finite, they are separated into Individuals of larger, or lesser Dimensions.

There is a Sort of Life and Soul in all Things ; and the Term *Inanimate* is a Non-Entity : And nothing is *Innate*, except some Mens Brains ; for Immenfity is full of Being as sure as God is immense, prolifick, and productive, and his Government boundless.

Annihilation, is another meer Fantom, and should be expung'd out of Language ; for as Things did not proceed from nothing, neither can they be reduc'd to nothing, *Psalms xxxiii. 6.*

All Beings and Things, spiritual and elemental, have Places of Being and Habitation ; and if there were not an immense local Place, there cou'd be no dimensionary local Places, *Isaiah* xlv. 18, *Job* xxxviii. 4, *Jude* 6. *Deut.* x. 14, 1 *Kings* viii. 27.

All that our Eyes behold, or that our Senses can perceive, demonstrate, that they are not self made or self sustain'd, preserv'd, or self govern'd, but are the Productions of infinite Wisdom and infinite Power ; and by it preserv'd, sustain'd, and govern'd : And as Wisdom implies Goodness, so, although we can't now comprehend the Design, and final End of God's Providence, we must needs believe that all Things have Degrees of Goodness, and do tend to, and will end in final Goodness.

God is the only uncreated Nature, and the only self-existent Being ; and as the most perfect spiritual Body, *Col.* ii. 9, of indivisible Matter, he is the most material of all Beings ; filling and containing all Things, centering in, and concentrating and comprehending all, and the only Center of all, and so he must needs be ultimately incomprehensible, though sufficiently known to rational Creatures.

And he is the sole Cause of all, ever causing and sustaining all, as he is an eternal Cause, &c.

Thirdly, If God did not eternally fill Immensity with his own Essence, which is his real Being, not potentially only, but essentially, and therefore locally and really, he must be a meer Phantom, and in Reality nothing ; or, at least, must be very imperfect ; for whatever is less than Immensity, is as nothing to it. Our vast terraqueous Orb does admit of an Atom bearing some Proportion to it ; but the imaginary tenth Orb, which is absurdly call'd the first Mover, if it were innumerable Millions of Times larger than Imagination can stretch, it would be as nothing, compar'd to Immensity, which God essentially fills, and is his local Place of Being, and his boundless Habitation ; in which he ever acts and rests, free from Obstruction or Contamination, as being entire, pure, impromiscuous, impervious, incommixible, indefinite, indivisible, innocuous, and uncontaminate, pervading all, and is unpervaded, and the first Mover, and the only Mover
of

of all Things contain'd in Immensity ; and he makes all finite Things move, and move each other, and with each other, as he pleases, and is the sole Governor of all Things.

And it would imply an Imperfection in God, to confine his Works of Creation to any dimensionary Place ; or not to fill Immensity with them. And the first in Order of created Being, must be a created spiritual Matter, or what is call'd created Nature, which must needs fill Immensity ; because whatever is less than Immensity, is as nothing in Comparison with it. And God made created Nature coeval with himself, as well as Eternity and Immensity : Actively, God is Prior, and productively so, as he is the Cause of all Things ; and the Primordial Cause makes second Causes ; but as God eternally produced them, or from all Eternity, he made them coeval with himself. And God's Dominion must needs be, as he is, boundless, as well as endless, and so the Works of Creation must needs be ; for God does not govern nothing, or what has no Being.

And as we see within our View, an infinite Variety of Things in a gradual Concatenation without a Chasm, so we must needs believe there is an infinite Variety of Things that are now invisible to us, from created Nature, with which God has filled Immensity from the greatest to the minutest Thing in Nature.

And as the Want of Free-thinking makes some Men Atheists ; so the Want of considering the Reason of the infinite, gradual, concatenate Variety, makes some Men meer Deists ; that is, to believe a God without a Providence ; and thoughtlessly to imagine, that God, when he has created a World, fill'd with living active Creatures, and Things necessary for their Use, and fix'd them in a Course of Continuance by generate Succession, leaves them to themselves, and takes no farther Care about them ; which, upon due Thought, will be found to be a very stupid and absurd Notion, and even below the paternal Care of a wise and good Man : But a regular Course of Thinking would lead them Step by Step from this broad Way of Error, into the strait and narrow Way of Truth.

They cannot but see, that all Things have the Impress of Wisdom, as well as Power ; and if they see Evil as well as Goodness in Things ; let them recur to infinite Wisdom, and consider the Beginning, Middle, and End of Wisdom's Designs ; and they will find, by applying this Thought to God's apparent Attributes of Wisdom and Power ; and as Wisdom implies Goodness, it will induce and enforce them to believe, that Evil may ; nay, they may see, in many Instances, that it does produce a greater Good ; and find, that all the Contraries in infinite Variety, are as necessary as Rain is to fair Weather.

And God's Immensity being self-evident, he must needs be every where present, and so cannot leave his Creatures to themselves ; and it is contrary to his Wisdom and Goodness, to imagine he should, farther than to a necessary Use of Free-Will, in a great Degree, not absolute, but subject to his controul. And God's Omnipresence and Wisdom are Proofs of his Omniscience ; and indeed God's Attributes consider'd together, demonstrate, that they are self-evident : But as God only has, or can have essential innate Ideas, infinite Variety is necessary to illustrate God's Perfections, and the Perfection of his Works and Creatures ; and to give rational Creatures a true Estimate of what is most excellent ; and by gradual Degrees of Perfection, and by Imperfections, to give us a true Idea of consummate Perfection, and to make us sensible of the most exalted Happiness ; in all which, God's Providence will appear, in the End, to be perfectly good in all Things, as acted by infinite Wisdom.

But more particularly, as God only has, or can have essential innate Ideas of Things in *non esse*, or unspecified, but which by his Power shall have specified Being, so in the infinite, gradual, concatenate Variety in the whole Creation, there must needs be, and of Course will be Mediums, Opposites and Contraries, to supply Creatures Want of Ideas, and to illustrate the Whole, and to give all rational Creatures, especially (what can't be known by Intuition or Instinct) a true Estimate of what is most excellent ; as Darkness is opposite to Light, Folly to Wisdom, Deformity to Beauty, monstrous to perfect Natures, Pain to Pleasure, and Death to Life, and all in gradual Degrees, as from the brightest Light to the most palpable

palpable Darkness; and in vegitive, sensitive, animal, intellectual, and spiritual Life, of various gradual Degrees: And there is a perceptible Revivification from Death, in both Vegetives and some Animals, besides that of Generation from Seed, that first dies, and then revives; and spontaneous Productions pass through Death to Life. And what we call Evil, is but a necessary Opposite, tending to Good, except the self-caus'd Evil of just Punishment, to particular Persons, which yet does and will illustrate general Good, and tend to the perfect and final Good of the Whole; but more or less, according to rational Creatures good or ill Use of Free-Will.

And as there are gradual Degrees in all Things in Nature, from a Medium to Extreame, both Ways; so in the Actions of free active Creatures, as far as they are free to act, there are gradual Degrees, from Things indifferent, or in a Medium, to good, better, and best; without any Chasm, in, or between the positive, comparative, and superlative Degrees of Goodness in Excess, or Superexcellence: And, on the other Hand, from the same Indifference or Medium, there are contrary, gradual Degrees to Evil, in bad, worse, and worst of all, to the Extremity of Evil, or Naughtyness; and so it must needs be, as infinite Variety is necessary, from the least to the highest Degree of Perfection and Imperfection, *Rom. vii. 14, chap. viii. 18 to 22.*

Thus there are gradual Degrees of Perfection, from the least, or least valuable, to the greatest, or most valuable Thing in Nature, *Psal. viii. Psal. xix. 1 Cor. xv. 40, 41.* And Imperfections are necessary to illustrate Perfection, Blindness, *John ix. 3.* and so is Deafness, and Dumbness, *Exod. iv. 11.* and Lameness, Folly, *contra* Wisdom, and all Defects in Nature do the same: And as Death is necessary to illustrate the Excellence of Life, so Death must be in various Forms, and in all Stages of Life, from the Birth, and Abortion in the Womb, to the greatest Age of Man. Gradual lingring, sudden Death, by Fire, Water, Storms, Tempests, Thunder, Lightning, and by small Accidents. But if Mankind only were mortal, and that we did not see irrational Animals die, how wretched and miserable should we think our State and Condition.

But if *Adam* had not fallen from his first State of Being, he and we might have seen Death in them, without being mortal. But Death is no Annihilation, but a Change, and shews the Value of Life : And if we live as we ought to be always prepar'd to die, sudden Death will be a welcome Surprise, and the sooner wait us to a happy State of new and eternal Life ; and Storms, Tempests, Thunder, &c. are a necessary Part of infinite Variety, and have good as well as ill Effects, and make us the more sensible of our Happiness in Calms and pleasant Seasons ; and Contraries shew us the true Value of all Things ; for as God only has, or can have essential innate Ideas, I must repeat here, that no Creature could make a true Estimate of any Thing, but by its contrary, or by comparing Things of greater and lesser Value together ; and though we can't fully understand the least Particle of Matter, we can sufficiently understand every Thing, so as to make a proper Distinction and a due Estimate : We can, by Comparison, tell how much Gold excels Lead, though we can't fully understand all the Qualities of either of them, yet is it not implicit but rational Belief, that there is greater Perfection in Things than we can understand.

We must needs believe, nay, we may perceive the preceding Article to be true ; and it is most consistent with God's Attributes, which are self-evident, as is apparent in his Works, and as the contrary Opinion, is contrary to them : And they are the only absolute, and infallible Test of all religious Truth, of which God's reveal'd Word, recorded in the Holy Scriptures, is our Rule, and his Holy Spirit our Guide ; but both the Scriptures, and Spirits, and all Things, must be explain'd try'd, and right understood by that only infallible Test of Truth ; *John* v. 29, 1 *John* iv. 1, 1 *Thes.* v. 21, *Mat.* xxiii. 29 ; God's Attributes being all of them Powers, and all-powerful.

Things that are self-evident, we may discover by human Cogitation : And I have shewn, that Eternity, Immutability, and universal Nature are self-evident ; and that all Things in Nature are Evidences of infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, and demonstrates them to be self-evident : And these three Attributes imply Truth, Justice, and Mercy, summ'd up in infinite Love. And the infinite, gradual, concatenate Variety of Things in universal

versal Nature, demonstrate, that the Graduality of Things must needs proceed to Contraries, and gradually revolve again to their Opposites: And in all Extreams there are Mediums; and all Things shew gradual Degrees of Perfection; and nothing is imperfect, that is fully finished. And as there are gradual Degrees in Colours, from black to white, so there is from heat and cold, and from Pleasure to Pain, &c. And hence what we call Evil, is a Consequential opposite to Good; and both are in gradual Degrees, from a Medium of Indifference to the opposite Extreams of Good and Evil; and every Extream illustrates its Opposite, and gives us a just and true Idea of infinite Perfection.

But in judging of moral Duties, and personal Virtues, Reason is so byas'd by deprav'd Sense, that we find all Countries in general, and almost all Men in particular, differ more or less in their Sentiments of Vice and Virtue, and of mutual and social Duties too. And this has caused different Opinions in practical Religion, as well as extravagant Absurdities in theorick Ordinances, and superstitious Institutions, which shews the Frailty and Fallibility of human Reason, in Things that are not self-evident; and demonstrate, that natural Religion is a meer Dream; and that there can be no certain, or true Religion, but by God's divine Institution; and that we cannot by our Reason alone, distinguish true from false Religion. But by considering the infinite Variety, and by applying our Reason to God's self-evident Attributes of Wisdom, Power, Goodness, Truth, Justice, Mercy, and Love, we may rightly understand the Holy Scriptures, and clearly distinguish Truth from Error in Religion; and by free, unbyas'd, and expatiate Thoughts, we may discover natural Reasons for all the Mysteries in the true Christian Religion, so as to leave no Room for meer implicit Belief.

We are led Step by Step, from the minutest Thing in Nature, to universal created Nature, which is, and needs must be an immense, as well as an eternal Production of God, not of his Essence nor of nothing, but of the external Effluvia, ever flowing from, and recurring to his Essence; and so is by him made coeval with him: And by his Wisdom and Power he made created Nature the Portraiture and Productor of all its numerous various Offspring:
It

It is a Spirit, invisible to elemental Eyes, but is perceptible, and evident in its Effects. And is either the externalized Effluvia, in Part chang'd; or is *Æther*, or pure Air in the Abstract, if not the effluviated secret Spirit, which constitutes it. Pure Air is salutiferous, Life-giving, salubrious, and preserving, by the virtual Power of God: But as in its numerous and various Product, there is, and needs must be, Antipathies, as well as Sympathies, and Opposites, and Contraries, and in a gradual Concatenation or Chain, link'd together in a Circle; and as Death must be a necessary Opposite to Life; so there is insalubrious and noxious Qualities, as Accidents adhering to Air, and being in it; but not every where in Immensity, but only in ours and other Atmospheres: But pure Air revivifies from Death, as well as it gives Life.

And if by Elements is meant either First Principles, or unmix'd Bodies, then Air only is an Element, or is the prime Element of the three other Elements; for Air in the Abstract, as free from the Vapours of an Atmosphere, is most pure and unmix'd; but the other three have Mixture discernable, or chymically to be proved. And Air is the first created Principle of all created Things, and to which they resolve and return by Rarefaction. And it seems a confused Idea to number invisible spiritual Things, with Things visible and tangible; and better to call Air the *Bas* of the three Elements, as it contains the *Semina*, and is the Productor of the visible Elements, and their Receptacle when refin'd by Rarefaction.

Air is not a visible Element, but an invisible Spirit; but Elements properly so call'd, are both visible and tangible. Air is, from the first Cause, the secondary Productor of the Elements of Fire, Water, and Earth, by various Motion, Fermentation, Condensation, Gravitation, Connexion, and Cohesion; and they are dissolved, and resolv'd to Air again by Rarefaction; for Fire which dissolves Earth and Water to Air, is in its Expiration resolv'd with them to Air. Whilst our Eyes, or, rather, our spiritual Sight, is immerg'd, and enclos'd in Element (for it is spiritual Sight that conveys the Prospect of all visible Objects to the Mind) we can neither see Air or Wind, but by their Effects, we may perceive their real Being and Powers.

Wind

Wind is not Air, nor Air Wind, but Wind is by Motion produced of Air condens'd, and Water rarify'd; and is warm when mix'd with Sulphur, and agitated by various Motions, and cold when chill'd by Nitre, in the Air, and then its Motion causes Frigidity: But pure Air is neither burning hot, nor intense cold, nor lukewarm; but of a vivifying, or Life-giving nourishing Temperature; and the Extreams of hot and cold, are produced by the various Motion of Air, and by Sulphur and Nitre in the Air, or Atmosphere. And it is the Extreams of hot, cold, moist, and dry, that cause Death: But there is no Sort of elemental Death, but may be reviv'd by pure Air. And either Air is the Divine Effluvia out-breath'd, or the Effluvia is in Part chang'd to Air, when fully effluviated, and is the Cause of all Sorts of created Life, spiritual or elemental, vegetive, animal, and mineral; and though all elemental Things are nourish'd by the Sun's gentle Influence, bred of, and from Air; yet the extream heat, as well as extream cold, destroys, but does not annihilate, but only resolves the Elements to Air, the first *Ens* and Spirit of all created Being, except there is a Difference, between the divine Effluvia, when fully effluviated and chang'd, and pure Air; but they seem to be one and the same Thing, God's secret Voice, and efficient Working, and operative, and effectual Act, 1 *Kings* xix. 11, 12.

Nothing that is not reveal'd in Holy Scripture is to be obtruded on the World for Articles of Faith; but all rational Opinions founded on, agreeing with, and supported by God's Attributes, may be safely received, as far more probable Truths than what Man shall positively assert for Truth, having no greater Evidence than human Reason alone.

But pure *Æther*, or Air in the Abstract (not Wind) seems to be the divine Effluvia, a Spirit, and not an Element, but the Productor of the Elements of Fire, Water, and Earth; *Psalms* xxxiii. 6, *Job* xxxiii. 4, and *Gen.* ii. 7. seems to be, and, I think, certainly are, Proofs of it, and it seems more agreeable to true natural Philosophy, and is not in the least contrary to God's Attributes, but much more agreeable to them, than that he created all Things of nothing: For if that Opinion magnifies his Power, it depreciates his essential prolifick Energy; and
Fire

Fire seems not so universal as Air is; and Air is every where equally the same, and Fire seems not to be so, if potential, not actual, as Air is, as not appearing equal every where. Air is Life producing, and it is not Air, but the first elemental Condensity in Air, that seemingly causes Mortality to Animals and Vegetives; but Fire may be more universal than Water, and Water more universal than Earth, and it seems necessary to be so.

But Air itself is seemingly free from Extreame, and the Extreame is not seemingly Air, but the Accidents of the Elements of Fire and Water, and a terrestrial, sulphurous, and nitrous Sediment or Condensation in Air; but whether Air is the divine Effluvia breathed out of, and from the divine Essence, or a Production of it, there is no Text of Scripture that says that any Thing was made of nothing. *Heb. xi. 3.* plainly says, that elemental Things which are visible to us, were made (not of nothing but) of a spiritual *Mensstruum*, or Thing, and of several spiritual Things, deduced from one, that are now invisible to us, and don't appear to us any other Way, but in their Operations, and by their real Effects.

In the infinite Variety of God's created Works, necessary to illustrate the Whole, and to give a true Estimate of each particular Thing to rational Creatures; I have shewn, that Opposites and Contraries, Antipathies as well as Sympathies, must needs be, though all created Things are harmoniously link'd together by a gradual Concatenation; and all Things, in some Degree, are correspondent, and mutually assistant, though wrought by Opposition and Repulsion, as well as by Attraction and Cohesion; and by Dissipation, as well as Connection; Dissolution, as well as Concretion, Mortification and Destruction, Revivification and Renovation, by which Operations Elements are form'd of Spirit condensed, and resolved again to Spirit by Rarification.

But as the infinite Variety of Things, and the various Operations and Effects, and all these Productions proceed from one Thing, and not from nothing, so neither can any Thing be annihilated, and be reduced to nothing.

But

But by God's all-wise, and all-powerful, and just Direction, all created Things are made and preserved, mortify'd and destroy'd, revived and renewed, debas'd or exalted, corrupted or purify'd, condensed or rarify'd, connected or separated, coagulated or refined, by a contrary Operation necessary to produce the infinite Variety, in which Work Gravity, Levity, Attraction, and Repulsion, Depression, and Exhalation, and Circumlocation are necessary; and so are the Extrems of Heat, Cold, Moist, and Dry, by which all created Productions are effected, by God's Wisdom and Power, to his Glory, and the final Good of all his rational Creatures.

In all this Variety, gradually proceeding to Contraries, as Pain is opposite to Pleasure, Evil must needs be a Contrary to Good.

But by shewing the Excellence of Good, Evil does and will produce a greater Good; so that nothing is a real Evil, but what is unavoidably as consequentially caused by the Misuse of rational Creatures necessary Free-Will.

And there is no one Thing in Nature, that if a Man of common Sense freely and thoroughly thinks of it, but must convince him, that it is the Work and Effect of infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, but there must needs be a *plusculum*, or *ultra quam*, somewhat in all Things, above and beyond our Understanding: All Things are, or may be sufficiently understood by us, but not so fully and perfectly as God understands them; so that in all Things there must needs remain a *ne plus ultra*, a Check to us, beyond which we cannot go, a Mystery even to Angels, 1 *Pet.* i. 12, and must needs excite our Wonder and holy Admiration, and consequently a holy Adoration of God.

Had God fix'd all inanimate, moving, and changeable Things as steadily as the numerous heavenly Orbs are, suspended each in their several Spheres and Courses, the Atheist might have said, that all was done by an unintelligent Fate: Or were all such Things as are fix'd, as changeable, and as variously and continually chang'd, as some Things are; he might have said, that all was done by a meer blind Chance.

But Free-Thinking on both these Cases, must needs convince him, that all is the Work of infinite Wisdom and Power: And a due Consideration of the infinite gradual Variety, in which, whatever is, through Want of Free-Thinking, imagin'd to be imperfect, will appear to be gradual Degrees of Perfection, though it can't be expected that any Thing should be fully perfect, till its ultimate End, when it is compleatly finish'd. And thus Free-Thinking will convince a meer Deist of God's wise and good Providence in all Things, and that all Things were in various Degrees made good, and do tend to, and will, in due Time, end in final Good. And we shall find that God's Preſcience, and Preordination of all Things, is in all exactly agreeable to his infinite Wisdom, and Goodness. He foreknew the Fall of Angels, and of Men; and could have prevented both: But he gave them the necessary Use of Free-Will, for their good; and though they made ill Use of it, he can, and will, in, and by Christ, bring a greater Good out of Evil; and make all Sorts of Evil serve to illustrate perfect and superlative Goodness, and Happiness. And all shall confess his Justice in punishing Sinners, and his Mercy in not consuming them.

God created all Things very good, and for their good, and in his own due Time, and all for good Uses and Purposes, and all to assist each other, and to their mutual Good; and he created our Solar System of Planets, of which our terraqueous Orb is one, in six Days, but not in six of our Tropical, or Polar Days, for it can't be of both and so is of neither; one Polar Day and Night being three hundred sixty five Tropical Days and Nights; and 'tis a strange Vanity that makes Men imagine, that God's Work must needs be govern'd by the Periods of Time of our inferior Orb; or to confine his Creation of living and rational Creatures to our Orb alone: Angels have Habitations, *Job xxxviii. 17, Jude vi.* though they are spiritual Beings; and move with the greatest Agility, and Velocity; and Worlds are mention'd in the plural, without Number, *Heb. i. 2.* and certainly not without Inhabitants, *Isaiah xlv. 18.* and it is a Sort of childish Pride in Men, to think, that of all the innumerable Orbs in Immensity, none of them but ours, is inhabited by Creatures,

tures, and Creatures capable of knowing God to be their Creator, and of adoring his Majesty, and admiring his wondrous Works, and gratefully acknowledging his Bignity, and Beneficence. A Particle of Sand bears some Proportion to our terraqueous Orb ; but, alas ! our Orb bears no Proportion to Immensity : how much then do we depreciate the Attributes and Glory of God, to imagine our particular World is the only inhabited one, (except one limited Place call'd Heaven,) of all the innumerable Worlds contain'd in the universal World Immensity, which is the Heaven of all Heavens.

Intellectual Natures purely spiritual, are as liable to Error and Evil, as human Nature when left to their own Will ; for it is the Spirit that thinks and acts in us : And the Devil, who is of a spiritual Nature, fell, by the ill Use of his Reason and Free-Will ; but God can and will preserve both Angels and Men, free from doing or suffering Evil, when they have past the Time which he has appointed for the Tryal of their Obedience to his Laws made for their Good.

And now having been led through the gradual, concatenate, infinite Variety, from the minutest Thing in Nature, to the greatest, and to universal created Nature ; we cannot stop there, but must proceed again to uncreated Nature, and gradually to the self-existent, and primordial Cause, by its principal, eternal, gradual Productions which, doubtless, as most agreeable to infinite Perfection, are of the same immutable Essence, so not created, but generated and produced by internal Emanation : But created Nature and its Offspring are (not of the immutable Essence, nor of nothing, but, of the airy spiritual Effluvia of that Essence externally spirated or effluated ; eternally effluating or out-breathing ; and when fully effluviated, does in Part remain fix'd, and is in Part changeable, and changed into an infinite Variety of Beings and Things, in a regular Gradation and Concatenation some of which are fix'd in their several Specifications, and some change to less Degrees of Perfection ; and some from thence are refin'd to greater Degrees of Perfection than at their first Formation.

As the self-existent Essence is eternally immutable, as well as immense, there cannot be many Gradations in it: But Three is the most perfect Number, next to a Unit. Periods of Time have Beginning, Middle, and End; and in Measure there is three Dimensions, Length, Breadth, and Depth, &c. In Creation, Cause, Operation, and Effect; and there is three chief Qualities or Properties in all Things, as an Image or Emblem of *Alpha*, and *Omega*, and *I am*; and there seems to be, from the primordial Cause, a mediate Cause, and an immediate Cause of Creation; and without which I can't apprehend how any Creation cou'd be operated; and yet there must needs be a Chasm between God, and Creature, which must be filled up, to give the rational Creatures a perfect Knowledge, and an entire Satisfaction in their Beings, *Eph.* i. 10, *John* xvii. 21, 22, 23, to supply the Want of essential innate Ideas, which God only has or can have.

But though I demonstrate that God has made his Works Evidences of himself and of his Attributes, and of his true Religion, and has implanted a Sort of Religion, or Laws of Observance, in all Creatures, by natural Instinct; yet I don't offer these Propositions, as a System of natural Religion in Man: I believe there is no such Thing; for whatever there now is of True Religion in Heathenism, or Mahometism, as well as Judaism, is undoubtedly the Remains of God's Original Institutions, by Divine Revelation.

Mens different Opinions in different Parts of the World about Morality and Virtue, shews the Fallibility of natural Reason and human Judgment, except try'd by God's Attributes, the only infallible Test of Truth.

And hence it is certain, that a Religion of corrupt Nature must needs be corrupt; and a Religion of fallible Men, must needs be fallible and erroneous: But as God, and he only, is infallible, his reveal'd Religion must needs be true and infallible; and it is clearly distinguish'd from false Religion, by his self-evident Attributes.

God gave Laws to all Creatures, suited to their several Natures; and doubtless he gave Man Laws, and a Religion suitable to his rational Nature.

Irrational

Irrational Creatures have their Laws and Rules how to act, direct, preserve, and govern themselves, by a wonderful and mysterious natural Instinct, which Man is not endued with.

Man has perceptibly a rational, spiritual Soul, but he can't by natural Instinct, nor without long and dangerous Experiments, distinguish his proper Food from Poison, as the Brutes and Insects naturally can, and do; nor know, but by good Information, or sad Experience, his Enemies and Destroyers; and what is necessary for his Safety and Happiness: But Brutes know all these by natural Instinct.

And even if more than one Man and Woman had been at first created, (as some Men absurdly suggest) and in the Condition in which Men and other Things now are, or as God fore-knew they soon wou'd be; and if left to a long, tedious and hazardous Discovery of Good from Evil, they might all of them been poison'd, burnt, drown'd, or devour'd by rapacious Beasts, or, as having no Apprehension of Danger, might by many Accidents have all of them been destroy'd: For the Nature of all Creatures and Things was not quite changed at *Adam's* Fall; only the Earth was made more steril, and to produce Thorns and Thistles, which yet are necessary in the present Condition of Things, *Gen.* iii. 17, 18, 19; but Work, which before was only a pleasant Diversion, chap. ii. 15, was now made Labour and Toyl, chap. iii. 19.

Divine Revelation shews, indeed, that *Adam* was made immortal possibly, but conditionally, and not absolutely so; and whilst he preserved God's Image in him entire, and did not rebel against God, rapacious Creatures had such a Dread of him, as not to have rebelled against him; nor would they, or any Thing in Nature, have kill'd or hurt him. He would have been free from suffering Evil, if he had not done Evil, in disobeying God's good Commands; and his Life would have been a Scene of perfect and uninterrupted Happiness.

But if we deny Divine Revelation, and only consider Things in the State which we now see them, *Adam* being left without Revelation, or such natural Instinct as Brute Animals have, or Angelick Intuition, he might have been many Ways destroy'd, before he could distinguish

guish Things that are noxious or destructive ; so that Divine Revelation was so absolutely necessary, that it cannot, with any Shew of Reason, be disbelieved.

And it is contrary to God's self-evident Attributes, to imagine, that he should make Creatures, capable of knowing him, and their real Happiness to be enjoy'd, in the Knowledge of him ; and yet leave them to a long, tedious, anxious, and disconsolate Discovery of him ; and to a hazardous Discovery of Food from Poison, and of what is necessary for their Preservation, and Well-being : And especially considering that God made Man in his own Image, and Lord of all Creatures in this World, and made all Things for his Use, and all Animals subject to him, and in dread of him ; and if they now sometimes rebel and disobey him, it is since he rebell'd against God, and does now oft disobey him.

But God's Image is not so defac'd in Man, but it may still be discern'd ; and his Sovereignty over all Creatures in this World, is still conspicuous. And as God did not give Man such natural Instinct as Brute Animals have, it must needs be, that God reveal'd himself to Man, and taught him all Things necessary to his Safety and Happiness. Of which God's Attributes of Wisdom and Goodness are incontestible Evidences.

And in what a wretched Case must a new created Man have been for a long Time, in but barely imagining that there was a God, the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all Things, and yet not to be able to arrive at any Certainty of it, or any Satisfaction in it ; and to find himself inferior to Brutes, in the Want of that natural Instinct which they have : And to think, that this was Man's deplorable Condition, is to think unworthily and impiously of God, and to affront the Divine Being. And he that does in Reality believe in God, must needs believe the Revelation of himself, and his holy Laws and Ordinances, and all necessary Instructions to *Adam*, for his Safety and Happiness : And as he made them sociable Creatures, he doubtless taught them a proper Language fit for Conversation.

For how grievous and dissatisfactory must it be to a new created rational Creature, to perceive that he did not make himself, nor know how to sustain, and preserve him-

himself in Being ; and not to know the Author of his Being, or how he came into Being, nor how he and others should speak and understand, and converse together, and which must needs fill him full of Fears, and frightful Apprehensions and Disquietudes under such gross Ignorance. And on the first Imagination of a Creator and Preserver, how anxious must he needs be, for Want of being assur'd of it, and fill'd with the most uneasy Desires to be certain of it, and to have a satisfactory Knowledge of God, and to adore and pay him their utmost Love, and humble Gratitude.

And though, by long and constant Contemplation of God's Works, *Adam* might find Reason to believe them to be the Work of God, yet without some Manifestation of himself to him, otherwise than by his Works, it wou'd have been impossible for him to find Comfort or to be satisfy'd or easy in his Mind.

Nor was ever any wou'd-be Atheist, or meer speculative Deist, ever easy in his Mind, or can be.

A hardened Reprobate strives to stifle all Apprehensions of a Deity, or of his vindictive Justice, but the frequent Perturbations of Mind, oft visible in his Countenance, shews that he is not free from Terror of what he strives not to fear.

And though some pretended Atheists and Deists, put on a Shew of Morality and Virtue in general, it has been found, that their hugging some secret Vice, and their Unwillingness to part with it, has made them averte to being undeceiv'd, and rationally inform'd of God's real Being : But without the Knowledge of whom, and true filial and grateful Love of him, and an entire Confidence in, and secure Dependance on him, no rational Creature can be fully easy, or certainly happy.

I knew a Man, who being a Foundling, acquir'd a large Stock of Wealth, and had some considerable Authority conferr'd upon him, who told me, That no Man cou'd be more happy in his Circumstances, than he shou'd think himself, but for one Thing that very much disquieted his Mind ; and that was, that he was so unhappy, as not to know his Parents ; and he said, if they were ever so bad, it wou'd be a Satisfaction to him to know them, because he must needs think them the worst of Parents,

rents, and unnatural Creatures, that wou'd nor own their Child, and let him know them. And he said, his Uneasiness in not knowing them, was not to be avoided, nor could be express'd. And I have heard that many Persons have express'd the same Disquietude as being under the same Misfortune.

And can we be so base as to think, the God of Nature, and Father of all Mankind, who is infinitely wise and good, and who so bountifully provides for his Childrens Preservation, and shews abundant Tokens of Love and Tenderneſs; and which we have Reason to believe he will, and does shew in Death, as well as Life, and in eternal Life; can we think him so unnatural a Parent, as not to have made himself known, by some visible Appearance to the first Man at his Creation (and taught him to understand and speak to him) as well as he afterwards appear'd to the Patriarchs, and Prophets, *Gen.* xviii. 1, 2, 5, 22. and *Isaiah* vi. 1. and by them to all Mankind. It is impious to imagine that he did not reveal himself so as to shew his supernatural Power, acted by a visible Form or Similitude suitable to Man's Capacity, and then by a Voice only without Similitude, promulg'd his Laws, as *Deut.* iv. 13 to 16 shews, and *Gen.* iii. 8, 10 implies. But in our present State, to expect that God should thus appear, and speak with a suitable Voice to every Man, is to expect that God shou'd alter the fix'd Design of his Works and Providence, and make us Angels, and Angels Men, &c. But in Christ we may be advanc'd above Angels. But let us not only be content, but humbly thankful, that God has made us Men, and not Brutes, Insects, or inanimate Things, insensible of our Being. Let us be content then and thankful, that God has made us Men.

And let us consider God's Goodness in general, in instructing our Primogenitors, and us by them, in all Things that were then absolutely necessary for their Happiness, at their Creation; and for their Safety, Preservation, and Happiness after their Fall. And let us admire his Goodness in particular, in reserving some Things (which were not at first necessary) to Man's Discovery or Invention, in every succeeding Age, and doubtless will do so, to the End of the World; that Men may delight themselves, in
dis-

discovering, or inventing some Things that were till then unknown, and find Pleasure in the different Genius, and Talents that he has given to different Men, and with which all others take Delight, in viewing, or using.

And that we should not doubt of his appearing to *Adam*, and in Visions to the Prophets, he prov'd his extraordinary Appearances by Miracles; and prov'd the Truth of his visionary Inspirations to the Prophets and Apostles, &c. either by Miracles, or by the Completion of all their Prophecies, except such as refer to Futurity.

But till we are all become spiritual Beings, we ought not to expect to see God, who is a spiritual Being; nor could we bear a Voice spoke to all Men at once, that wou'd shake Heaven and Earth and must needs do so, and be too terrible for us to hear, and impossible for us to bear.

But indeed it is impossible for any rational Creatures to be happy, but in the Knowledge of their God and Father, whose Offspring we are, *Acts* xvii. 29.

And on this Account, when Men had forgot most of God's original and subsequent Revelations of himself to Man, they sooth'd themselves with imaginary Revelations, till (though false) they believed them, and impos'd them on others for their fallacious Comfort; and hence sprung false Religions: But all false Prophecies and pretended Inspirations are easily distinguish'd from true ones, by the Test of God's Attributes, and by Time, discovering false Prophecies, by all Men that will take due Care, and use necessary Diligence, to be inform'd of the Truth; and not give themselves up to blind Ignorance, through implicit Belief; for which the Evidence for Divine Revelation leaves no Pretence, nor for wilful Ignorance any Excuse.

And the Consideration of the Necessity, Design, and End of Miracles, and the Reason of their ceasing, as being sufficiently exhibited, is sufficient to explode, and confute all falsely pretended Miracles, as inconsistent with the Attributes of God to do Things unnecessarily; not but in all Ages, some Things are supernatural, and not in the common Course of Nature; and some few small Things miraculous, necessary to prevent indolent Stupidity and Infidelity. But pretended Miracles are used to

deceive People, and to delude them, to obey Mens Commands contrary to God's Laws, and by that Means to enslave Mankind, *Mat. xv. 6 to 9.*

God has placed every Thing in the infinite gradual Variety in its Station, but not unalterably. But whilst Man is in his present State of Life, in which his intellectual spiritual Mind is plac'd in an elemental Body, it is absurd to expect to see God in his spiritual Being, or that he should by some Mediums perceptible to Man's Sight or Hearing, appear to all Men at once, or to every Man at different Times, for that would break the Links of regular Concatenation, and make a Chasm, and be contrary to the Designs of infinite Wisdom. We are a necessary Part of infinite Variety, and shall be so in our separate State, and in the Spiritualization of our elemental Bodies, and their Re-union with our Souls in God's due Time.

And as an infinite gradual Variety needs must be, and consequently Opposites and Contraries to illustrate the Whole, and to supply us rational Creatures the Want of essential innate Ideas, which God only can have; and to form in them a just Estimate of what is most excellent, even to have a true Idea of God's Perfection. He must be a wretched Fool, that despises, or derides the meanest of God's Works; or that is discontent with God's Providence, with Respect to himself.

We have an Emblem of our future State, and spiritual Being, in our Dreams: And they are rational Proofs of God's Divine Revelation (to some Men more than others, as many as he thought fit) by supernatural Visions, and by instructive and portentive Dreams; for we oft dream in the Dark of seeing as clear Light as by the Sun at Noon Day, and that we hear audible Voices, and converse with our Acquaintance, and other People; and seemingly see Places, and Persons, and Things, that we in Reality never saw in our Lives: And this is an incontestible Evidence for the more than Probability of divine Revelation, and of our future State of Life after our Bodies Death; and it highly corroborates other Evidences for both.

But the surest Proof of divine Revelation, is, that it is contrary to God's self-evident Attributes, not to have reveal'd himself to Mankind at their Creation, and not to leave

leave Creatures, whom he made capable of knowing him, to discover their God, by long and disconsolate Search, and unsatisfactory Conclusions.

If God had at first given Man such an Instinct as Brute Animals and Insects have, to know all Things necessary for them, and suitable to their several Natures, he would not have deprived them of it, without some extraordinary Cause for it.

But that Man never had any such Instinct, is doubtless true, and that he was verbally instructed by God, as an intelligent and social Creature, and capable to teach his Posterity.

God most certainly revealed and made himself known to *Adam*, by his eternal Son's assuming some suitable and agreeable and glorious Form of Being, visible to elemental Sight as soon as *Adam* was created, and taught him all Things necessary to his Well-Being; and as his Creator and Governor, commanded him to observe his Laws in all Things, in a positive and negative Sense; necessary for his Safety and Happiness, in the Continuance of his primary State of Rectitude; and to prevent his falling from it, as *Gen.* chap. i. and ii. intimate; and after his Fall he told him how his Irrectitude must be rectify'd, and his lost Happiness regain'd, as chap. iii. 15 implies; and which was doubtless explain'd to him as fully, as *Job* xix. 25 intimates; for whatever of God's Laws were repromulg'd when lost, or occasionally repeated when necessary, they all refer to the Creation, as *Isaiah* xl. 21, and 1 *John* i. 7, and 2 *John* 5 shews; and this is most agreeable to God's Attributes, and to disbelieve it is contrary to his Attributes and to Reason apply'd to them, as well as to the Holy Scriptures.

But when God had created *Adam* and *Eve*, he doubtless prepared them to hear his Voice, in proclaiming himself to be God, the only God (the Creator, Sustainer, Preserver, Sovereign Lord, and Supream Governour of all created Beings and Things) by the visible Appearance of his Eternal Son, as the Angel of his Presence, and the Messenger of his Covenant with Man, *Isaiah* lxiii. 9, *Mal.* iii. 1, *Gen.* xviii. 2, 3, 22, chap. xix. 1, made from the Beginning, *Gen.* ii. 16, 17, *Isaiah* xl. 21, *John* i. 1, 1 *John* i. 1, *Gal.* iii. 17, *Heb.* xiii. 20: And as most suitable

ble to Man's Nature, he probably appear'd in the Form of a Man with Wings, as is imply'd, *Mal.* iv. 2, and most probably flying from above, down to them in a gentle Manner, as both he and Angels did, to the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles, *Gen.* xviii. 2, 3, 22, chap. xix. 1, chap. xxviii. 12, 13, *Exod.* iii. 2 to 6, *Josb.* v. 13, 14, 15, *Judges* xiii. 3, 20, *1 Sam.* xxiv. 16, *1 Kings* xix. 5, 7, *Isaiah* vi. 2, *Ezek.* i. 5, 6, chap. viii. 2, 3, 4, *Dan.* viii. 15, 16, chap. x. 5, 6, *John* i. 51, *Acts* xviii. 26, 29, 39, chap. xii. 7, chap. xxvii. 23, *Rev.* i. 12 to 16, chap. iv. 8, ch. viii. 13, ch. x. ch. xiv. 6, ch. xviii. 1, ch. xxii. 8, 9; and doubtless spake to *Adam* and *Eve* in a kind Manner, and taught them to understand him, and to converse together; and shewed them some supernatural Signs, and wrought some Miracles that were awful, but not terrible, mix'd with something that was agreeable to their Ideas, and very delightful to them; and then told them, that God, who made them, and all Things, was an immense, spiritual Being, invisible, *Gen.* iii. 8, 10, to elemental Sight, *Deut.* iv. 10 to 13, ver. 15 to 19, and ver. 33, 36; but that his Attributes of infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, chap. ii. 7, were perceptible in all his Works, *Rom.* i. 19, 20, *Psalms* xix. 1 to 6; and having thus prepared them to hear God's Voice without Terror, God then doubtless spake unseen, except, as afterwards at Mount *Sinai*, *Exod.* xix. 6 to 20, ch. xx. 1 to 21, *Deut.* v. 1 to 26; and most certainly God then proclaim'd himself to *Adam* and *Eve*, (as *Exod.* xxxiv. 6,) and said, *I am the Lord God, the only God, and no other God is, nor can any other God be*, *Deut.* iv. 35, 39, chap. vi. 4, *Isaiah* xliii. 11, 13; and by the same Voice, most certainly promulg'd and pronounced his Commands, Laws, Ordinances, Statutes, and Judgments, *Gen.* xxvi. 5, except such as were necessarily added after their Fall; and by *Adam* he gave his Laws to all his Posterity, and repeated them to *Noah*, chap. vi. 18, chap. ix. 1 to 6, tho' forgot by many, who did not like to retain the Knowledge of God and his Laws, *Rom.* i. 28, *Psal.* lxxviii. 1 to 11; and God's Laws are all contained in the Decalogue, and are expressly, or occasionally mentioned in *Genesis*, and well known to, and obey'd by *Abraham* and *Isaac*, chap. xvi. 5, and to *Jacob*, chap. xxxi. 50, 52, chap. xxxv. 2, and

and to *Joseph*, chap. xxxix. 9, and to *Melchizedech*, ch. xiv. and to *Pharaoh*, chap. xii. and to *Abimelech*, chap. xx. and chap. xxvi. as first given, chap. ii. 16, 17, 24, as *Mark* ii. 27, 28, *Isaiab* lviii. 13, 14, shews to have been from the Beginning, chap. xl. 21.

And when God repromulg'd his Laws to and by *Moses* to *Israel*, he repromulg'd them to all Mankind ; for if the Neighbour Nations, who frequently went to see their Worship, would have accepted of their kind Invitation, *Psalms* c. &c. to have learn'd of them, to know the True God, who made and sustained them, ver. 2, and to have joyned them in their pious Worship of him, ver. 1, 3, and so to have experienc'd his Goodness and Mercy, ver. 4, and taught their next Neighbouring Nations, and have done the same at Christ's teaching his Gospel, and so on from Nation to Nation ; true Religion would soon have spread all the World over : And this being Man's Duty to do, God left them to perform it ; nor ought they to expect any supernatural Means, but in all succeeding Ages ought to obey God's Command by Christ, *Mat.* xxviii. 19, in going or sending Men into all Nations in the World to preach it.

And as Man's Want of natural Instinct proves the Necessity and Reality of divine Revelation, so it demonstrates the Wisdom and Goodness of God, in giving him rational Faculties ; and in making paternal Care, and filial Gratitude, the delightful Spring, Bond, and Seal of mutual Love ; and renders social Happiness most perfect, and secure. But the Want of natural Instinct could not have been timely supply'd in our Primogenitors, but by divine Revelation.

It is no less derogatory to divine Wisdom, Honour, and Goodness, to doubt of God's giving Mankind a right Key and Test, by which to understand aright all the Laws and Ordinances that he gave, repromulg'd, and repeated to, and by the Patriarchs and Prophets, and the Apostles and Evangelists ; and if vain Man would but try all his Reasons by that infallible Test of Truth, he would then see his Errors, and conform to the Truth, to his entire Satisfaction and Delight, as it is the only right Way to Safety and Happiness.

But

But Free-Will being necessary to all active Beings, and without which, they would be mere Machines ; so Man, by the Misuse and Abuse of his Free-Will, in Disobedience to God, fell from his first perfect happy State, to a State of suffering Pain and Death, and all his Progeny must needs be, of natural Consequence, involved in his unhappy chang'd State of Being ; but not without Hope and Help from God : All which God did doubtless reveal to Man, and which are oft repeated, and faithfully recorded in the Holy Scriptures.

And they are undoubtedly our true Rule of Faith, and God's Holy Spirit is our sure Guide to all Religious Truth, of all which, God's Attributes are the only infallible Explanation and Test.

And whatever Books, or Parts of Books of the Holy Scriptures, may have been lost ; what remains, not only contains the whole revealed Will and Law of God ; but as a Proof of it, God's Ordinances and Statutes are oft repeated, and graciously inculcated, in those remaining Scriptures, that have sure and incontestible Proofs of Divine Inspiration, God's Attributes being the Vouchers ; so that whatever is lost, nothing is wanting ; nor is it consistent with God's Attributes to suffer any Thing to be wanting, that he requires us to know, believe, and practice : And if any Thing is miscopy'd, mistranslated, obliterated, interpolated, or added ; God's Attributes will distinguish Truth from Falsity, and direct us infallibly to the true Sense and Meaning of whatever is imperfect or obscure ; except the necessary Mention of some Things, that are not design'd for us to understand in this Life, whilst we are to know but in Part, they referring to our future State ; or are Things not to be fully known, till their Accomplishment. And though the Original System of Religion, as it was taught by God to *Adam*, and by him written, is not to be found entire in one Place ; being in Part suffer'd to decay, and be obliterated, or wilfully defac'd by the idolatrous *Jewish* Priests ; yet the Sum of the Decalogue is to be found in *Genesis*, and *Exodus*, before the Repromulgation of it, chap. xx. either expressly or occasionally mention'd, and was known to King *Pharaoh*, *Gen.* xii. and King *Abimelech*, chap. xx. and obey'd by the Patriarchs (as well as by *Abraham*, *Gen.*

Gen. xxvi. 5,) chap. xxxv. 2, chap. xxxix. 9. &c. And God's Precepts and Commands, are so often occasionally repeated, in the Holy Bible, that we ought to adore God, and admire his good Providence, in their Preservation; in which God's occasional Superintendency over Man's Free-Will, is very conspicuous, considering how little they car'd for retaining the Knowledge of God, and his Laws, *Rom.* i. 28, *Psalms* cvi. 21, *Psalms* lxxviii. 10, ver. 32 to 36.

The Sum of Religion is contain'd in the Decalogue; but if the Explanations of it are dispers'd throughout the Scriptures, with what else was necessary to be known, relating to Man's Fall and Redemption, &c. we ought not to think it a Trouble to Search the Scriptures, *John* v. 39; for as it is our true Interest to practise God's Precepts, and to obey his Laws, a little Application, to search them, will make it our chief Delight to seek for God's Truth, as for hid Treasure, and Pearls of the greatest Value; it being our heavenly Treasure, laid up for our happy Enjoyment in Eternal Life, in Heavenly Glory, *Mat.* xiii. 44 to 48, chap. vi. 19, 20, 21.

And though we can't possibly understand all Things, it ought not to discourage us in our Enquiries, into all Things that we can possibly know and understand; God has commanded us to seek, and to know him and his Truth, as I have before shewn: But God, as being infinite, must needs be incomprehensible, and cannot be fully comprehended by finite Creatures; and many Secrets must needs be in him, and belong to him, which we cannot know, and therefore ought not to pretend to know; but we freely may, and ought to endeavour to know him, as much as possibly we can do; and to understand aright, all that he has revealed, as it is the only Way to, and the Means of our ultimate Happiness.

There are many Things in the Bible that are not yet reveal'd to us, nor will some of them be reveal'd in this Life, but are God's Secrets, *Deut.* xxix. 29; some of which are in *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, *Revelations*, and other Books; and to pretend to decypher them, is an audacious self-conceited Presumption, and a great Offence to God.

And

And if some Texts which God requires us to know, understand, and practise, could be rightly understood by Man's frail Reason alone ; or if Men did not pervert God's Laws and the Scriptures, to suit their Passions, Vices, and partial Self-Interests, we should not have the many Religions and Sects that are now in the World ; and not only so, but Men of the same Church differ and quarrel about many Points of Doctrine, both Protestants and Papists : The Jesuits, and several Orders of Fryers, and their Secular Priests, often quarrel and fight about their different Opinions : But if Men will form their Reason in Religion, by God's Attributes, and submit their fanciful Opinions to them, and lay aside Prejudice and temporal mistaken Interest, they would all of them soon agree in the Truth.

If it be ask'd how we can ascertain which of the two different Opinions in Baptism and the Lord's Supper is right ; I answer, I shall fully demonstrate that Point in the *Second Part*, and shall only say here, That we must not attribute to the Creature that which is due to the Creator only, or to the Divine Nature of Christ, as the mediate Cause of Creation and Regeneration. Baptism is ascertained by, *Rom.* ii. 25 to 29, *Gal.* v. 6, chap. vi. 15, chap. v. 14 to 25, and *1 Pet.* iii. 21 : And in the Lord's Supper to attribute any Merit, Virtue, or Efficacy to the consecrated Elements, is to depreciate Christ's Merits, and to think the one sufficient Sacrifice of himself insufficient. But the constant Performance of all Religious Duties that are Divine, do incite us to the Performance of all moral, social Duties, and of personal virtuous Duties ; and in that Sense are efficacious Assistances ; and both together do habituate us in true Holyness, Righteousness, Virtue, Peace, and Unity ; in the Love of God above all Things, and our Neighbour as ourselves, *Mat.* xxiii. 23 to 40, and in doing to all, as we would they should do to us, and in not doing to others, what we would not willingly suffer from them, as the Words imply, chap. vii. 12, *Luke* xi. 46, *Rom.* ii. 21, 22, *1 Cor.* vi. 7, 8, *James* ii. 1 to 17.

And that God has made all his Works Evidences of his Being and Attributes, and of his revealed Will to Man, appears by the Impress of Wisdom, Power, and Good-

Goodness on all; and from Man's Want of that natural Instinct which Brute Animals have, and which must needs have been supply'd by divine Revelation; Man being made a sociable Creature, and having a copious Language fitted to Conversation, and to receive from, and convey Knowledge to each other; but first to receive it from God, their Maker and Teacher.

And how wretched and miserable must Man have been, if he must (as wanting Instinct) have been left to a long and tedious learning of Language, and the Knowledge and Use of Things, which Brutes readily know, as soon as they have Life: And yet, in all other Respects, Man is vastly superior to Brutes; is their Lord, and they obey him, except as Man rebels against God, they sometimes rebel against him; and he oft causes those inanimate Things, that were made for his Good, to do him Harm, and to destroy him, by the Abuse of them, and of his Free-Will, and Reason, that was given him for his chief Good.

But as it is impossible for any Man that thinks freely, rightly, and fully, not to believe in God, so it is apparently contrary to his self-evident Attributes, to disbelieve or doubt of his not instantly making himself known to *Adam*, at his Creation; and instructing him in all Things, necessary for his Safety and Happiness, or not to leave him void of a perfect intuitive Knowledge, which implies a spiritual Capacity to see God, or else without a perfect Instinct to discover the Nature and Use of all Things, at first Sight; and without which, I must urge again, that he must have been under a long and dangerous Discovery of Things necessarily suiting his Nature, and to supply his Wants, and which he could not form Reasons to understand, but by long and sad Experience; and by which Search he might have been destroy'd, before he had learn'd what was absolutely necessary for him to know.

Man's State of Being, before his Fall, is beautifully described in *Ecclesl.* vii. 29, *Gen.* i. 2-5, chap. ii. 7, 19, chap. v. 1, *Ecclesl.* xv. 14 to 17, chap. xvii. 7, 14, *Wisdom* ii. 23, *1 Cor.* xi. 7, *1 Pet.* i. 4, *Mat.* v. 5, *Rom.* ch. ii. Integrity and Perfection were his happy State, as being made very good, and Righteousness was as a Robe, and Judgment as a Diadem; made lower than Angels, who continually stand before the Throne of God, but crowned

with Glory and Honour, *Psalms* viii. 5, but necessarily left to the Use of Free-Will, as the Angels were ; so that *Michael* the Arch Angel might have fallen, and Satan have stood in his first State of Being. Christ, as Man, is exalted above all Creatures, *Phil.* ii. 9, *Col.* i. 18, ch. iii. 11 ; and Man, in Christ, may be superior to Angels in Honour, Renovation, and Eternal Happy State in Heaven, *Rev.* i. 6, chap. iii. 21, 2 *Tim.* ii. 12.

Man's Understanding before his Fall was superlative, and his Will dictated in a regular Rectitude ; and his Affections freely consented to, and readily agreed with his Reason and Will, with a joyous and delightful Complacency. He necessarily had Affections and Passions (as had our Blessed Saviour Christ *Jesus*) but he could with Ease absolutely govern, and fully subject them to his Reason and Will ; in doing which, he continually enjoy'd a pleasant Tranquility of Mind, free from Anxiety or Perturbation, and freely possess'd his delightful Paradise, without any Restriction, except the Prohibition of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, *Gen.* ii. 17, of which if he had not eaten, and so was doom'd to know Evil experimentally, he would otherwise have known it intuitively only, without suffering Evil. And Passions so easily govern'd were not Infirmities or Defects, but necessary to a more satisfactory Use of his Faculties than he could have found, had he had no Need of the Exercise of his Judgment, in the Government of himself.

And what ineffable Joys and Transports of Soul must he have, with an undisturbed Serenity of Mind and Conscience, free from all Doubts and Fears, except the filial Fear of offending a good God and tender Father, arising from filial Love, excited by Gratitude. And his humble Adoration of God, was full of holy Ardour and rapturous Joy, and whilst he had nothing to cause anxious Fear, his Hope of a State of Life purely spiritual to succeed his present State, and to live eternally in the visible Presence of God ; and ever beholding his glorious Majesty, in the Perfection of Joy and Bliss, and in uninterrupted Happiness and never ending Felicity, was to *Adam* an Antipast of Heaven, and a Heaven upon Earth ; and thus he would have lived on Earth in perfect Joy and
Delight,

Delight, till his Translation to final Perfection in the glorious Mansions of Heaven.

And as his Soul was pure, and free from Impetuosities, his Body was more beautiful, healthful, strong, and com-
plear, as being free from Sickneſs, Pain, and Death, made immortal, but not with an Impoſſibility of becoming mortal; that depending on the good or ill Uſe of his Free-Will, and his Obedience to God's Commands made for his Good only, and which conſequentially implies, that the Diſobedience of them muſt needs be the Cauſe of his ſuffering Evil, and becoming mortal.

He was not created after God's Image in Dominion only, but in the ſpiritual Rectitude of his Mind, and in Knowledge, Underſtanding, Wiſdom, and Free-Will; and Capability of Immortality, in Virtue, Juſtice, Righteouſneſs, and Holyneſs; all which, in ſome Degree, ſtill continue.

And when Man has his final Perfection in Chriſt, it will far excel *Adam's* primitive Perfection; it will be like the rebuilding the Temple, of more Glory than that at the firſt building, made ſo by Chriſt's Divine Preſence.

But that Man is now in a leſs perfect and leſs happy State, than his Primogenitors were at their Creation, is doubtleſs true; for as God made all Things good, it is evident from Man's Proneneſs, to do himſelf and others more evil than good, that he is in a degenerate State, contrary to the Nature of Brute Creatures in general, which hurt not themſelves willingly, nor others, but for natural and neceſſary Food, or in Self-Defence, or prompted by Man to fight, or provok'd by Man to hurt him. Man is apparently fallen from his firſt State of Being. But as ſome Creatures were made to be Food for others, ſo Creatures of Prey act according to Nature in general; if ſome Kinds of them do ſometimes otherwiſe, and quarrel and fight when not for Food, it is nothing in Compariſon to Men's evil corrupt Nature, who have a thouſand evil Motives to deſtroy others, and to tyrannize, oppreſs, and defraud them, and to tempt, entice, and delude them to their Ruin; but Brutes generally deſtroy for natural and neceſſary Food only, or in Self-Defence, or prompted by Men to fight. There is, indeed, ſome few Exceptions to this general State of Brute Animals. There is a Govern-

ment amongst them, which is generally observed, and kept in due Order ; but sometimes, in some Kinds of them, the Chiefs act in some few Particulars as Tyrants. And though in general they have all Things in common, yet some Kinds of them claim some particular Properties which they will not suffer others to invade, though pressed by Hunger, except in exuberant Plenty they admit them.

But if Brute Animals of any Sort, do sometimes fight, or tyrannically domineer over others of the same Kind, in a particular Case or two, they generally agree and are peaceable

But Man that knows the Safety, Security, Benefit, and Happiness of Sociality or friendly Society, and the Danger of Hostility, is not only daily breaking the Peace, but is unnaturally bent upon the Destruction of others, at the Hazard of his own Life ; when he is neither injur'd by them, or in Want of any Thing to make Life happy : But seeks their Blood or Ruin out of meer Pride, Avarice, Envy, or causeless Malice, or through spiteful Revenge, in Cases in which he has been the Aggressor, and first hurt or injur'd them ; and when they have not hurt or damage'd him, except unavoidably in Self-Defence of their own Lives or Properties ; and by endeavouring to prevent their Usurpations, or Encroachments, or unjust Exactions, or forcible Invasions, Persecutions, and Destructions.

And a meer Deist that believes the Existence of an intelligent Being, and that he is the Productor of all Creatures, though he believes not Divine Revelation, and without considering that God made Man in his own Image ; yet seeing that Man is Lord and chief of all Creatures in this World, endu'd with superior Knowledge, and with the Faculty of Reason, he can't with Reason imagine, that the Creator made Man in a less Rectitude of Will and Act, than the Brute Animals ; for as he acknowledges Wisdom, Power, and Goodness to be in the primordial Cause of all Things, he must needs confess, that it is contrary to those Attributes to have made Man to wilfully prone to act, contrary to his known true Interest, and with such evil Dispositions to his Fellow Creatures, nay, even to his Parents and Children, is oft cruel and unjust

If it be objected, that it is as contrary to God's Attributes to suffer Man to fall into a less perfect and good State than he first made him.

I answer, That Free-Will to act, is necessary to all Creatures that are of knowing and active Natures ; and that as God only has, or can have essential Ideas, experimental Knowledge must needs be more perfect than intuitive Knowledge, and consequently will produce greater Excellence and Happiness in rational Creatures. And as a necessary Part of infinite Variety to illustrate the whole Creation ; and in which, though in exact Graduality, Contraries must needs be ; such as Darkness to Light, Blindness to Sight, Pain to Pleasure, Evil to Good, and Death to Life ; some rational Creatures must needs have experimental Knowledge of these Contraries for some Time, though not for ever. And as Pain gives a truer Idea of Pleasure, and Death shews the true Value of Life ; God might have made Man liable to suffer Evil and Death, as well as irrational Creatures. But as Free-Will is very different in Rationals, to what it is in irrational Creatures, and as they were to govern their Will by their Reason, and not by meer Instinct as Brutes do ; and as rational Creatures have the Knowledge of God, and Ideas of intellectual Happiness, far superior to sensual Happiness, which Brutes have not ; it was more agreeable to God's Goodness and Justice, to leave Angels, and Man's suffering, or not suffering the Evil of Pain and Death, &c. conditionally, to the good or ill Use of their Free-Will, for a short Time of Tryal, than to make them to suffer Evil by arbitrary Force. Irrational Creatures enjoy much Good, and suffer but little and short Evils ; and their low and confin'd Degrees of Knowledge makes it easy to bear ; and Release from Confinement or Pain (we may discern) gives them a Joy in Ease and Freedom, which they could not otherwise be sensible of ; which shews how necessary Evil is, to shew the true Value of Good.

But rational Creatures being capable of knowing God, they could never have been satisfy'd in and with his Dispensations, had they suffer'd Evil in their original Nature, and not as a Penalty for the Misuse of their Free-Will. And though the Offspring of the original
Parents

Parents of Mankind suffer in Part of, and by natural Consequence, as issuing from a degenerate, corrupt Nature in our Primogenitors, it may end in our greater Happiness, as I shall more particularly shew.

But first to compleat the Inference to be drawn from comparing the rational with the irrational Natures, and considering God's Wisdom in the Distribution of the various Sorts, and gradual Degrees of Goodness, we find the rapacious Brute Animals live more friendly together than Mankind, and never quarrel in Plenty, as Mankind do, when they want for nothing; and in that they are better and happier than we. And though some innocent Brutes are made to be Food for them as well as for us, they enjoy more Good, Ease, and Plenty in Life, than rapacious Animals do: And tho' they suffer not by their own Fault, as Mankind originally did, and still in general do, they were made for Man's Use and Service, and they suffer only the Evils of Sense, and not of the Intellect nor of conscious Guilt, as rational Creatures do, and which is incomparably greater, and more intolerable to bear: And if Man only had suffer'd Pain and Death, how abject and miserable must he have thought himself to be, especially if he had no Knowledge or Hope of a future happy Life, 1 Cor. xv. 19. And if no such Thing as Sorrow, Trouble, Pain, and Death had been, neither Angels nor Men, as wanting innate Ideas, could have known how to make a just Estimate of Life, Ease, and Freedom, from Sorrow, Pain, and Death. But secret Things belong to God, who when his Providence is fully known, will appear to be perfectly good in all and in every particular Thing.

But in summing up all these Considerations, it evidently appears, that Mankind are apparently in a fallen State of Being, as being not only subject for a short Time to suffer Evil; but it appears by our Irrectitude of Will, and our natural rapid Proneness to do the greatest Evils, till truly regenerate by true Faith, God's Grace, and the blessed Influence of the Holy Spirit. As to our suffering Evil, if not for our evil Acts, we shall by that more perfectly know, the true Value of Good, and so be abundantly happier in the Enjoyment of Good superlative, in

a State

a State of Eternal Life and consummate Happiness, *Rom.* viii. 18 to 25, *2 Cor.* iv. 14 to 18.

But to prevent all Error in Religion, and to discover Truth, we must search, examine, and try the Scriptures, the Spirits, and all Things, by the Rules as before prescrib'd, and by God's Self-Evident Attributes as the only infallible Test of all Religious Truth, *John* v. 39, *1 John* iv. 1, *1 Thes.* v. 21, *Mat.* xxii. 29; in which last Text, Powers implies all God's Attributes, as they are all powerful, and Powers, and as the Context shews.

I have shewn, that human Reason might, indeed, by long Observation and Contemplation, on the Works of Creation, discover the Creator, and his Attributes; and that the Deity subsists in a Trinity of Personalities: And that by due Consideration of God's Attributes, we might form a Plan of true Policy, Equity, and Virtue, but not except we were in a regenerate State, and Rectitude of Mind and Judgment. And therefore this is no Objection to Divine Revelation: For Man is in a State of corrupt Nature, and Irrectitude of Mind and Judgment, subject to Frailties, irregular Passions, and mistaken Self-Interest; and is too far byas'd by inordinate Affections, Apperites, and vicious Inclinations, to be so truly wise, as to be fully impartial, and perfectly right in this Discovery of the Divine Being, or in forming a right Plan of Religion and Government, or of Morality and Virtue, as is demonstrable, by the numerous, and various Schemes of false Religion, and injudicious Governments that are in the World; and by Mens different and contrary Notions of Morality and Virtue, in all Nations upon Earth.

But in the Holy Scriptures rightly understood, by applying our Sense of them, to God's Self-Evident, and unerring Attributes, we shall find, there is nothing reveal'd, by God to Man, but what is perfectly agreeable to Men's true Happiness.

The Sense of our Being, and well Being, makes our Love of God above all Things, and the Honour due to him, our chief Delight, as well as our Duty and our Obligation in Gratitude, for his amazing Love to us; in making us chiet of all his Works in this World, and Lords over them; and giving us all Things necessary to our well Being, and for our Delight and Happiness.

And

And the mutual Love of Mankind, as ourselves, is true Self-Love ; as Unity, Concord, and social Agreement, is the best Policy ; as it is the Security of our own real Interests. And to love our Enemies, and to do good to them that hate us, with prudent Cautions for our own Safety, and Security, is true Policy, as an Enemy gain'd is better than a Friend lost ; but we must keep a due Distinction between both ; and we need not trust an Enemy reclaim'd, and a Friend alike.

To do to all Men, as we would be done to, and to forbear doing to others, what we would not suffer from them, is good Policy, and the only Means to Peace, Safety, and Security, in the Enjoyment of our just Rights and Properties. But impartial Justice must be done in punishing Offenders, though if criminal ourselves, we would not willingly suffer Punishment.

As to what relates purely to ourselves alone, true Self-Love consists in Virtue, free from all Vice. Virtue has (even in Afflictions, Comfort, and) true and lasting Pleasure, and true Honour. Vice, after short Pleasure, has unavoidable Shame, and incurable Pain in this Life.

But if we will have a true System of Religion, both as to Faith, Morality, Virtue, and social Happiness, we must seek for it in the Holy Scriptures, as understood by God's Attributes.

God has appeal'd to his Works, and to Man's Witness, and allowed, nay, commanded us to seek, and by all possible means to find him, and to know him aright, and to try him, and his Truth, *Psal'm* cv. 4, *Deut.* iv. 29, *Isaiah* viii. 1 to 9, chap. xxviii. 16, chap. xliii. 10, chap. xli. xx, chap. xliv. 1 to 11, *Psal'm* xviii. 30, *Exod.* xvi. 6, 7, 8, chap. xiv. 12, 13, *Numb.* xi. 21, 22, 23, *Psal'm.* xxxiv. 8, *Acts* xvii. 27, 28, 29, *1 Kings* viii. 27, *Deut.* xxxiii. 27, *Isaiah* lvii. 15, chap. lx. 15, and that we should search, examine, and try all Things, that relate to Religion, *John* v. 39, *1 John* iv. 1, *2 Thes.* v. 21, *Acts* xiii. 11, 12, *2 Cor.* xiii. 5, *Rev.* ii. 2, 7, &c. that so we may prove what is the true Faith, and what we ought to do to obtain Eternal Life ; and to know whether we are in the true Faith ; and to examine whether those who call themselves Apostles, and Ministers of Christ, are true or false Apostles, and Ministers ; whether of Christ's true Church,

Church, or of the Synagogue of Satan, *Rev.* iii. 9, *2 Thes.* ii. 1 to 12, *1 Tim.* i. 2, 3, chap. v. 19, 20, chap. vi. *2 Tim.* ii. 16, 17, 18, and chap. iii. 1 to 8, chap. iv. 10, *Tit.* i. 7 to 11, *1 Pet.* v. 2, 3, 4.

In duly searching and trying the Holy Scriptures, by the Test of Truth, we shall find a primordial, a mediate, and an immediate Cause of all Creation and Preservation, in the Terms of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Three distinct and different Personalities, in Unity of the one Eternal and Immutable Essence, communicated by the Father's Self-Existence, and Immense and Inexhaustible Source of Being; and so they are in Unity, by the Father's Communication, the One Only God, Sovereign Lord, and Supreme Governor of all created Beings and Things; and the gradual Concatenation shews it most probable, that by a Trinity is the Method of Creation, in which, there is no Chasm but that which is, and needs must be fill'd up, by uniting the Divine and Creature Nature in Christ, *John* xvii. 21, 22, 23, *Eph.* i. 10. And it seems as if no Creation could have been, without a gradual Proceeding from the primordial Cause; first of the same immutable Essence, and thence of the Effluvia of that Essence, which when effluviated, becomes changeable in Part, and changes into an infinite Variety of Things and Beings.

And the gradual Proceeding from the primordial, by the mediate and immediate Cause, shews, that in the Personalities there is a gradual Difference, God the Father only being self-existent, and a Productor unproduced; the Son is both produced, and a Productor; and the Holy Ghost is produced, and proceeds from the Father and the Son, and with Respect to the Trinity, is not a Productor: But with Respect to Creation, the Father is the primordial Efficient, the Son the mediate Efficient, and the Holy Ghost is the immediate Efficient gradual Productor of all created Things, as the Holy Scriptures declare. *Col.* ii. 9, means the indivisible Essence of the Deity only, not personally in Christ alone; and *Mat.* xxviii. 18, Power is not meant personally alone in Christ, but as ver. 19, in Unity of the Trinity.

And farther, as to the Effence of the Personalities in the Trinity, the Son says, *The Father and I are One*, John x. 30; but with Respect to his Divine Personality, he says, *The Father is greater than I*, chap. xiv. 28; and that it relates to his Divine Nature is certain, for he prays, *Father glorify me, with the Glory which I had with thee before the Creation of the World*, chap. xvii. 5, and Worlds too, that is, from Eternity: For though our Solar System of Worlds is not six thousand Years old, many Worlds were, doubtless, of many prior Creations from all Eternity, as well as new Creations are, and will be to all Eternity, *Hab. i. 2*, chap. xi. 3, *Job xxxviii. 4* to 7, *Isaiah lv. 17*, chap. lxvi. 22, *2 Pet. iii. 12*, 13, *Rev. xxi. 1*.

With Respect to the Persons of the Trinity, the Father is super-excellent, as being self-existent alone, and super-eminent, as giving, and receiving, sending, and going, Mediation, and Intercession denote, and as mentioned in many Texts, which implies Inequalities in the Personalities of the Trinity, as the above Texts shew: Though, with Respect to Man, some Mediation may be made by a Superior between Inferiors, and Intercession too, to an Equal in behalf of an Inferior.

And though the Father personally is called God, as he implies the Son, and Holy Ghost, as they are of, in, and with him, Personalities of the One True God; yet to call the Son Personally God, and the Holy Ghost Personally God, is as plain Trirheism as Words can express: For the Father is not of them, but they of him, though with him, and by his Communication, are One God. *1 Cor. viii. 5, 6*, is a plain Distinction between the Deity of God, and the Personalities in the Trinity, and explains *John i. 1, 2, 3, 14*; and ver. 5 shews, there is no Reality in false Gods, nor real Plurality in the True God; but only a Trinity of Personalities, which in Unity, and not separately, are God.

The uniting the Divine and Human Nature in Christ, is necessary to fill up the Chasm between God and Creature, *Eph. i. 10*; and the Sacrifice of the human Nature in him that sinned not, is the only Way to satisfy Divine Justice, and to restore Man to God's Favour, sinful Man being of himself unable to do it, and undeserving God's Mercy.

Mercy. Besides that, God will have all Men, in some Sort, make Satisfaction to each other, for all Wrongs and Injuries done in this Life : And as they are unable to make full Satisfaction for them, Repentance and Faith, in Christ's Merits alone, must make full Satisfaction ; and Want of Repentance is none Acceptance of his Merits, and therefore such must suffer a dreadful Punishment from the omnipotent offended God.

As God has made his Works Evidences of his Being and Attributes, as the Deity ; and of his relative Attributes with Respect to Creatures ; so he has also made them Evidences of his being a Trinity of Personalities, in the essential Union of the Deity, to which the Being of One God only, is no Objection ; for God is in all Things, and all Things are in him, although he is indivisible.

And God has impress'd on all Things, a perceptible and indelible Mark of infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness ; which three Attributes imply Truth, Justice, and Mercy, summ'd up in Love. And Eternity, Immen-sity, and universal created Nature, which doubtless fills Immen-sity eternally, and which, as God eternally produced them, and necessarily made them coeval with him, as the eternal Productions of an eternal and incessant Pro-ducer ; they are the principal Images and Emblems of the Trinity in Unity of the Deity.

Created Nature is undoubtedly the universal invisible Spirit of Air, produced by the external Effluvia of the Divine Essence (except the Effluvia and Air is the same Thing) and is a pure Spirit, and not an Element. Air may be the first Change, that the Effluvia makes, which is, in Part, unchang'd, and so is the first Principle of the Elements.

And the principal Productions of the invisible Spirit call'd Air, are the three visible Productions call'd Ele-ments, Fire, Water, and Earth. (But Spirits are visible to spiritual Beings, though not to elemental Natures.)

And all the Offspring of the three Elements have three chief Principles in the three terraqueous Substances, Ve-gitive, Animal, and Mineral ; and though each of the three Elements is distinct to common Discernment, it is not without some Composition or Mixture of the three Elements ; for there is Liquidity and Terrestriety in Fire, Earth and Fire in Water, and Fire and Aquosity in Earth ;

and so in each Element a Ternary remains, as has been, and can be proved by a Process of Chymical Experiments.

Every created Thing has Body, Spirit, and Life, whether it be Celestial or Elemental; Mineral, Vegitive, or Animal: And even the *Caput Mortuum*, or Earth made dead by Chymical Processes, may be revived by Air; being impregnated by it, with fresh Salt, Sulphur, and a Mercurial Spirit, which are the three secondary Principles of all elementary Things, derived from one *First* created Spirit.

The Sun has three Qualities and Powers, Heat, Light, and Motion proceeding; but a prior Motion caus'd Heat, and Heat Light, from the external Effluvia of God's immutable Essence, out-breathed and effluated from the immutable but productive Essence of God.

Every Star in the Heavens has three Motions, axifar, or axilar, or central, and a circular and a seeming retrograde Motion; or have axifar, circular, and cycilar Revolutions.

Angels are nine Orders, in three Classes; and Man is a tripple Emblem, of the Trinity in Unity: His whole Man is elemental, spiritual, and intellectual, and his intellectual Mind, which is the Image of God, has Understanding, Will, and Action; and Memory is the Record of all his Thoughts, Words, and Acts; which are three in one, and those Faculties and Qualities of the Mind are undivided, though distinct and different: And his Animality, is spirituous, aqueous, and sanguinous; and his terrestrial Body, has three principal Parts, in its exterior and interior Forms, Bones, Sinews, and Flesh, with their necessary Appendages.

And thus what self-conceited Ignorants call foolish Things, God has made to confound their self-conceited Wisdom, which is their real Folly: For the minutest Thing in Nature bears an Impress of God's Attributes; and a Triad, or Ternary in each Thing, is an Impress of the Trinity in Unity; and were it not so, Discord, instead of Harmony, would appear in the Creation; and without a due Consideration of the infinite gradual Variety, and its consequential Opposites, God's Providence could not be understood to be, as it in Reality is, perfectly

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ly Wife and Good : God made all Things Good, all tend to, and will end in Good ; and by the Relative and Personal Attributes of the Trinity in Unity, the infallible Test of Truth is compleated, for our right understanding the true Rule of Faith, and Practice, as recorded in Scripture.

We can make no Computation between *Infinite* and *Finite*, but some Sort of Comparisons may be made of them ; God has made Man's intellectual Mind, or spiritual Soul, in his own Image, and requires us to imitate him in Holiness ; and therefore we may make, and it is necessary to make some Comparisons : And for our better understanding the Personalities in the Unity of the divine Essence, we ought to elucidate our Ideas of the Trinity, by some Sort of Comparisons. We should consider why the universal Air, which is a Spirit, and not an Element, and by God's Power, produces but three Elements, and is in the Elements, and they in it ; and that each Element, though sufficiently distinct, contains a small Proportion of the other Elements, and that there are three Principles in every Thing in elemental Nature ; and it is probable that it is so in spiritual Natures, for it is so in elemental Spirits, and they are derived from pure celestial Spirits : But to demonstrate that although the three Persons of the Trinity are of the same eternal, immutable, and undivided Essence, and are equal in Dominion over all Creatures, and are to be so honour'd and obey'd by us ; yet that there is a real Personal Difference, in which a Super-Eminence remains in God the Father, in the first Degree, and in the Son in the second Degree, the following Emblem will be necessary to demonstrate.

King *Henry II.* made his eldest Son *Henry* Associate with him in the Government of his Dominions ; in which the Son had equal Honour and Power with the Father, as far as respected the Government ; yet there remained a superior Personal Honour in the Father, as Father, and a Super-Eminence in him, in giving the Son the Honour and Power which he enjoy'd, and which he could not have but from the Father ; and it was a Favour receiv'd from his Father, which he could not give to him ; and if the Father and Son jointly, had constituted the Son *Richard* to be another Associate in the Government, here would have
been

been a threefold Distinction in their Persons, and three different Degrees of Personal Honour, though equal as to Government; in which the Father would have the primary and principal Personal Honour, and the eldest Son a medium Personal Honour, and *Richard*, though equal in Government, would have been Personally inferior to the Son *Henry*, as receiving his Honour and Power half from him, and *Henry* would have been Personally inferior to his Father, as receiving his Honour wholly from him.

But in the Trinity in Unity of the Deity, there is a greater Personal Difference, than that of producing and being produced, and of giving and receiving; there is that of praying and granting, sending and going, in all which, there is a Gradation gradually descending from God the Father to the Son, and from both, to the Holy Spirit; *John* iii. 16, 17, chap. xiv. 26, chap. xv. 26, chap. iv. 24, *Rom.* viii. 11, *Gal.* iv. 6: These Texts denote a Personal Super-Eminence, and a Sort of Personal Superiority in God the Father; and although the Son and Holy Ghost are of the same Essence as the Father is, it is not of themselves, but of, and from the Father, who only is self-existent; and though he has constituted them equal with himself in the Government of the World, it is by his Gift: They receive, but do not give any Thing to the Father; but in all Things concur with him in Unity and Harmony of Government, and in the joint efficient Creation and Preservation of all Things; but yet in which Operations, the Father is, as before prov'd, the alone primordial Cause, the Son the mediate Cause, and the Holy Spirit the immediate Cause: And though we are to honour and glorify the Trinity of Personalities (which is the most proper Term, *Heb.* i. 3, and as Man's Soul is more properly his Person than his Body) equally as the only one true Deity, yet as it is by God the Father's Gift, that the Son and Holy Ghost have that equal Honour; and as they, as Mediator and Intercessor, Personally make Request to him, *John* xvii. 5, *Rom.* viii. 26, 34, and a Sort of Motion in Council of the Trinity, we cannot but have a higher Idea of God the Father, in ascribing Honour and Glory to the Trinity in Unity.

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But after saying, *That we should honour the Son as we honour the Father* ; it may be thought a Contradiction, to add, that we can't avoid having a higher Idea of the Father than of the Son. But in rightly distinguishing between the Trinity in Unity, and the Personalities in the Trinity, the imaginary Contradiction will vanish. With Respect to the Divine Essence, Christ says, *The Father and I are one*, John x. 30 ; and yet, with Respect to Personality, he says, *The Father is greater than All*, ver. 29, and, *the Father is greater than I*, chap. xiv. 28, 31. And John v. 23, consider'd with the Context, ver. 19 to 30, shews, that honouring the Son as the Father, is meant essentially, and respects the Trinity in Unity ; and 1 Cor. xv. 28, seems to refer to the Trihity in Unity, and by Way of personal Eminence, to the Father, as self-existent, and the primordial Cause of all ; of, and with whom, the Son, and Holy Ghost, are the One God, who is All in All.

There is no doubt, but that King Henry II. was nominally called King *Henry* the Father, and his Son call'd King *Henry* the Son, for Distinction Sake, after the Father had made the Son his Associate in Government ; but neither of them had then any separate Power in Dominion ; and so the Son could not alone properly be called King of *England*, but King *Henry* Junior : But the Father, by Way of Eminence, might be called King of *England*, as he had been so alone ; and as the Son enjoy'd his Honour and Power of, and from him, their joint Acts and Deeds of Government must run in the Name of both, but in one Sovereign Authority.

But with Respect to the Deity, God the Father only is called God implicately in Scripture, and not the Son, or Holy Spirit ; for 1 John v. 20, does not say that Christ is God ; but taking in ver. 6, 7, declares the Trinity in Unity to be the true God and eternal Life : Compare ver. 10, 11, 12, with John v. 26 ; and John xx. 28, is not as Mat. xvi. 16, *Thou art*, &c. ; nor do the Words *seems me and believed*, ver. 29, make out that *Thomas* called Christ God, but seeing the Wound, and feeling his Flesh, ver. 27, after his Resurrection, which was his human, and not divine Nature ; and which he would not till then believe ; but as many Men oft do, in an astonishing Extasy,

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cry out to God, *my Lord and my God* ! so *Thomas* call'd uⁿ on him ; but that is not saying, *Thou Christ art God* ; and it is said, *God is a Spirit*, John iv. 29, not the Spirit is God, but *the Spirit of God*, Rom. viii. 9 ; but both the Son, *John* v. 21, (not of himself, ver. 3,) and the Holy Spirit, do Acts of Divine Power, *Acts* i. 8, and chap. xiii. 2, which shews his Divine Personality ; but neither does he act of himself, but by Mission, and in Concert ; and to say God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, is not only needless, but gives People too generally an Idea of Tritheism ; and if it is not plain Tritheism, as it seems to be, it is as unwarrantable as needless ; and it is sufficient to say, the Trinity in Unity is One God, and the only True God.

The 1 *Tim.* i. 1, wants the Word *our*, and should be thus, *of God our Saviour, and of our Lord Jesus Christ*. *John* i. 1, is explain'd by ver. 2, and shews, that the Particle *of* is wanting in ver. 1. *In the Beginning was the Word*, is not meant of Time in this World of ours, but God the Father's primary, eternal, essential, Production, of his only eternal Son ; which though an eternal Production, is first and chief in Eminence and Order ; and thus the eternal Word was eternally with God, as being eternally of the immutable Essence of God the Father ; and so, ver. 3, he was an efficient Cause of eternal Creation jointly with God the Father, and the Holy Spirit, as well as in the Beginning and Ending of the Creation of our Solar System, and our Terraqueous Orb. And 1 *John* i. 2, shews, by eternal Life, that *in the Beginning*, ver. 1, means eminently from all Eternity ; and if we will avoid Error and Confusion, we must, to suit the Idiom of our Language, add the Particle *of*, in translating *John* i. 1, *was of God*, that is, of the Divine Immutable Essence, as well as *Isaiah* ix. 9, should be, *of the Everlasting Father* ; and *Rom.* ix. 5, should be, *God be blessed* ; and *John* i. 14, should most certainly be as 1 *Tim.* iii. 16, and 1 *John* i. 2, made manifest in the Flesh ; for the Divine Nature is immutable, and cannot change, but may, and did unite with a Creature Nature, sprung from the divine external Effluvia of the divine Nature, as all created Things did, *Psalms* xxxiii. 6, *Jos* xxxiii. 4, *Gen.* ii. 7, of and from that invisible Spirit, which

which perceptibly by its Effects is found to operate in all elemental Things, though not visibly seen by elemental Eyes, *Heb. xi. 3*, which Text does not say Things were made of nothing, but of Things, that is, Spirits, that don't appear to human Sight, but in their Operations and Effects, are discernable to our Senses, as well as to our Reason.

There are Attributes in God the Father, which are not communicable to the Son and Holy Ghost, but rest in the Father alone; his Self-Existence, and Primordially are in himself only; and the Essence and Existence of the Son and Holy Ghost, are of the Father, and in, and with him, they coevally, and eternally, enjoy their Essence and Existence, as eternal Productions of the Father's prolifick, generative, and productive Fecundity, by internal Emanation, procedentially and eternally emanating, producing, and subsisting; which plainly demonstrates, a Super-Excellence and Super-Eminence in the Personality of God the Father.

And there are other distinct, and different Attributes in the three Personalities of the Trinity, besides Generation, and Derivation, as before noted; praying and granting, giving and receiving, sending and going, bidding, and doing, shew a Supremacy or Superiority in God the Father; although by his Communication of Power and Authority to them, and the irrefragable Harmony that is in the Trinity, they are in Unity, the God and Father, Sovereign Lord, and Supream Governor of all created Beings and Things.

There is also a Communication of God's communicable Attributes to created Beings and Things: His Attribute of eternal Being, he communicates to Eternity, and of immense Being, to Immensity; and the Universality of his uncreated Nature, to created Nature, by eternal, external Effluatation of, and from the Divine Essence, ever flowing and acting; and with which he eternally fills Immensity, and so made them coeval with him; and these three are the prime created Offspring of the Deity, and so are the chief Image and Emblem of the Trinity in Unity.

And next of the Spirit of Nature, which is pure Air, or Æther made of, and by the Divine Effluvia, invisible at present to us, I must repeat, that the three visible Elements, Fire, Water, and Earth, are produced of, and by that Spirit of Air, by Condensation, and Connexion, and Rarefaction; and being Three in one Essence, *i. e.* Air; they are an Emblem of the Trinity in Unity of Essence in the Deity.

And there are Attributes in God, which he communicates in finite Degrees to finite Creatures, and to intellectual and rational Creatures; Wisdom, Power, Goodness, Truth, Justice, Mercy, and Love, as before hinted, and Eternity, *a parti post*, or to Futurity; but Eternity *a parti anti*, is incommunicable; for though he made Eternity, Immenity, and created Nature coeval with himself, yet, in a proper Sense, the Cause is prior to the Effect; or as being the Cause of all Effects: Which though it is a Mystery ineffable, it is not inconceivable, and demands our rational Belief, and leaves no more Room for implicit Faith, than the Being of the least Particle of Sand does; for though it is visible to us, we can no more fully understand and explain it, than we can express how an eternal Cause is prior to an eternal Effect; but we can perceive that it must needs be so, as well as be superior to it.

They who deny that there is no positive Arguments in Scripture for the Trinity, deny the plain Demonstrations of it; and saying that it runs upon Consequences only, shews gross Ignorance; and to say, that admitting Consequences is ridiculing the Scripture and belying its Oracles, is false and impious*.

Consequences cannot be without a Cause, and the Consequence proves the Cause.

But the plain Declarations of a Trinity cannot be denied; for God will not give his infinite Glory, Honour, Power, Omniscience, &c. to any Creature, *Isaiah* xlii. 8, and Context; nor can any Creature so receive or exercise them (though in a finite Degree he gives his rational Creatures his communicable Attributes): But Creatures

* Letter to Mr. Bradbury, p. 19.

cannot be with God the Father One, *John* x. 30, or have all Power, and exercise it in Heaven and Earth, *Mat.* xxviii. 18 ; or can be omniscient, and not only know all created Things, but all the deep and secret Things of God, *Deut.* xxix. 29, as the Holy Ghost does, *1 Cor.* ii. 10, 11 ; and does Acts which none but Omnipotence, or a Divine Personal Being can do, *Gen.* i. 2, *Acts* xx, 28, *Rom.* viii. 26 ; and *Mat.* xxviii. 19, *In the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, plainly expresses an Equality in them, with this Super-Eminence or Superiority only in the Father, that the Son and Holy Ghost are of him, and he not of them ; and that their Essence and Attributes are communicated and given to them by the Father, ver. 18, which no Creature, as being finite, can receive or exercise : And if the Son and Holy Ghost were not of the same Essence, and had not the same Attributes (except the Personal Attributes of the Father, as primordial, &c.) it would be horrid Blasphemy, to say, or do all Things in their Name jointly, and in a plain express Equality, as ver. 19 implies and imports, consider'd with ver. 18.

It may be objected, that to say, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, is the same Thing, as to say, King *Henry* the Father, and King *Henry* the Son, and King *Richard*, if made Associate with them in the Government. But the Case is vastly different ; for the Persons of the Kings, though of the same human Nature, are three separate Persons ; but the Personalities in the Deity are three Persons in one inseparable Essence. And as three nominal Kings could not be one King, tho' united in one Kingly Government, neither can three Gods be one God. But as three separate Kings may be united in one Sovereignty, so much more may three inseparable Personalities be united in one Sovereign Deity.

And if we take the Sence of *Heb.* i. 8, with ver. 9, we shall find in this 8th Verse, (as in many other Texts) the Words are transplaced, and should be, *Thy Throne is of, and with God for ever* ; for ver. 9, speaks of the Advancement of the Human Nature, to be united with the Divine Nature in the Person of Christ, in his mediatorial Kingship, which resolves into the Deity, *1 Cor.* xv. 24 to 28 ; in which last Verse, the Son, that is, Christ's

Human Nature, is then still to be as it always was, and is subject to the Deity ; that is, as ver. 24, to the Trinity in Unity, which is the God and Father of all created Beings and Things.

The *Arians* blasphemously and foolishly object, that it is impossible for three Persons to be in one Essence undivided ; which shews how audaciously self-conceited and stupidly tenacious they are to their own Dulness and Ignorance. But it is contrary to Philosophy and to solid Reason, to think that any Thing that does not imply a Contradiction, is, or can be impossible to infinite Perfection ; and it is contrary to the plain express Words of Holy Scripture, *Mt. xix. 26.* Nothing is impossible to God, but Lasciviousness, Folly, and Impurity, or to become finite or impotent, these only are impossible to God, *Heb. vi. 18* ; and *1 Cor. ii. 3* mentions God the Father's Person ; and the Act of the Son and Holy Spirit imply Personalities : But these insolent, stupid, positive Wretches do not consider, and so do not know what a Person is, or what the Term means.

A Person is a living, *1 Cor. xv. 44*, intelligent, active, moving, spiritual Body, or Being, *Col. ii. 9*, and not an elemental Carcase, which without the Spirit we see is dead and motionless, *James ii. 26*, and is not worthy of the Term *Person*, till raised from the Grave a spiritual Body, and re-united with the Soul in one spiritual intelligent Substance.

And though Angels and Saints in Heaven, and all spiritual Personalities are now invisible to us, we are certain of their Being, and cannot disbelieve it by the invisible, spiritual Personality, or personal, spiritual Substance that is in us, and moves us to think, speak, and act ; and without which we are thoughtless, speechless, and motionless, *James iv. 5*, *1 Cor. xii. 7*, &c. whilst the elemental Body is dead, the spiritual Body lives, *Eccles. xii. 7*, *Luke xxiii. 43*, and so is Personal ; tho' Man's Being will be most compleat, when the elemental Body is revived and refined to Spirit, and reunited with the Soul in one spiritual Body or Person ; for it is the Spirit in Man, and not the external Figure of Man that is his Person, as above proved.

All Mankind are of one essential Substance and Nature, and so are Angels of another Nature ; and though the Whole of all the Species is one, and that the Substance is divided into many separate Personalities ; this is no Objection to the Being of three Divine Personalities in one Essence, undivided and inseparable : For the three Qualities in Man's Mind, of Understanding, Will and Act, are distinct, but yet are undivided, and so are an Emblem of the Trinity in Unity : And God has made all Things in the Creation in some Degree Evidences of the Possibility and Certainty of it, for there is in every elemental Thing, a Salt, a Sulphur, and a Nitro-mercurial Spirit, as is proved by a chymical Process ; and where they are invisible, they are known by their Effects ; and though these three, are separable by Art, yet they remain entire and inseparable in all and each created visible Thing, till dead, destroyed, or separated by Art : So that if they never died, or were not destroyable, they would remain eternally inseparable. Finite and Temporal Things are but faint and imperfect Emblems of an Infinite and Eternal Being ; but God has made them such Emblems of his own Being, as to be Evidences of it sufficient to confute and explode all Objections to it, and to shew that Atheism and Infidelity is the greatest and most stupid of all Follies.

And if the 7th and 8th Verses, of 1 *John* v. were interpolated, as the Context shews they are not, yet ver 6, 11, 20, are sufficient to prove a Trinity of Persons, in Unity of Essence inseparable in the Deity ; and the Witness that Man has in himself, ver. 8, 10, is sufficient to prove it ; and it is the very same Evidence that is mentioned ver. 8 ; for the Spirit, Water, and Blood in Man, whilst they remain in Man, are inseparable, and are not separated when first drawn from his Veins nor till influenced by Air, and then the Spirit separates and departs, and the Water appears. And as if Man were to live in his present State of Being eternally, these three distinct Things, as they agree in one, would remain for ever entire, conjoyn'd in one *menstrum*, in his Veins, though not Personalities but Things, they are Evidences for the Being of three Persons in one indivisible Essence.

God

God hath not left himself without a Witness, in any Thing that he requires us to believe ; and though no created Thing can be worthily compar'd to the Creator, every Thing bears some Impress or Image of his Wisdom, Power, and Goodness ; and what self-conceited ignorant Fools call foolish, or despicable Things, God has made them sufficient to confound their self-conceited Wisdom, and to prove it to be the greatest real Folly, *1 Cor. i. 27.*

But though the Son, and Holy Spirit are by God the Father's Communication to them, equal with him in Power and Dominion, yet they are not Personally to be call'd God, as the Father, of whom they are, is implicately call'd so, *Gal. i. 1, 3, Phil. ii. 11 ; 1 John v. 20*, does not say, that Christ is God ; but that the 'Trinity in Unity, as ver. 6, is the true God, and Eternal Life : *John v. 26. Rom. viii. 2, 9, 10, 11, Rev. xi. 11, 2 Cor. iii. 5, 6*, shew Life equally in the Trinity, and *Gal. i. 4, 5*, means the 'Trinity in Unity, which are, and and who is our God and Father, *Mat. vi. 9, Eph. iv. 6, chap. v. 20*, and is all in all, *1 Cor. xv. 28.*

And it is ridiculous for an *Arian* to say, that *1 John v. 7*, are only Witnesses, and that Persons and Witnesses are different Things ; for in how many Things does Man with Truth bear Record of himself, and so did Christ as Man, and the Father too, *John viii. 18*, and *John v. 37*, and so does the Holy Spirit, *Acts v. 32, 1 John v. 6* ; and so do all Christ's Works, ver. 36, and chap. x. 25, and so does all God's Works, *Acts xiv. 17, Rom. i. 19, 20*, and so are the Apostles Witnesses of the Trinity in Unity, *Acts v. 32*, and so are all Mankind, *1 John v. 8* ; and that this, and the 7th Verse, are genuine, and not interpolated, the Context plainly shews, and incontestibly proves ; for ver. 6, 9, 10, 11, shews the Record of God the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, as well as the 7th Verse ; and the 20th Verse shews, that they are One. And it is no Objection to say, that those Verses are not to be found in the antientest Copies that are now extant, and that they are only in the Margin of others ; for this shews that they were omitted in copying, as many other Things have been, in some Books of Scripture, as well as in human Writings ; and Christ's Ascension to Heaven was certainly either obliterated, or else omitted by Copiers, and not

not forgot to be mentioned in the Originals by St. *Methuse* and St. *John*, who say, Christ was to ascend, but not that he did ascend, and which is so material a Point, that they could not be guilty of omitting it; and St. *John* who had said so much of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, undoubtedly inserted it after ver. 26, in chap. xiii.; and which seems to be obliterated, rather than miscopy'd; because some of the remaining Verses are disjointed and irregular; but whatever is lost in one Part is found in another; so that nothing that God requires of us to know, believe, and do, is wanting to the Praise of his adorable Goodness, and over-ruling Providence; and *John* v. 31 to 37, is as chap. viii. 12 to 18, 45, 46, and *John* x. 50; and the whole Book and whole Scripture is sufficient without 1 *John* v. 7, and leaves no Room to cavil about that Verse.

The Truth is obvious in this Observation; the Original of St. *John's* Epistle, nor of any other Book of Holy Scripture, is not extant. And certainly, one of the first Copiers omitted those two Verses in Epist. 1, ch. ix. 5, 7, 8, and others, by transcribing from it, did the same, which being discovered, by comparing one of them with the Original, whilst in being, the Verses were first inserted in the Margin of one or more Copies, and after replaced in the Body of the Text in all future Copies of that one or more corrected Copies; and it is no Objection to say, that those Verses are not now in some or in many extant Copies; for if many Copies were transcribed from that in which the Omission was first made, and dispersed into distant Countries, and cherish'd by vile obstinate *Arians*; no Wonder that some or many of those transcribed Copies, of Copies that want those Verses, do still remain in the World. But if the *Arians* were not given up to strong Delusions, and obstinately positive in Error, as a just Judgment upon them, for their adhering tenaciously to mistaken Notions, or to Prejudice of Education, and an implicit Indolence, or careless Indifference, the Trinity in Unity is sufficiently proved without those two Verses; and yet the Conformity and Agreement of the Context and whole Scripture with them, demonstrates, that those two Verses were the divine Dictates of the Holy Spirit

Spirit, to St. *John*, to the real Confirmation of the Truth, and the full Confutation of the *Arian* Error.

There are some other Things mistaken, that relate to the Trinity, either by miscopying, or by Translators not considering the different Idioms of Languages, the due placing of Words, and the necessary Use of *English* Particles, and chiefly, God's Attributes, as the only infallible Test of Truth.

And for Want of distinguishing between the general Attributes of God, and the particular Attributes of each Person in the Trinity; and by not considering the incommunicable Attributes of God the Father, which rest in him alone; as being the primordial Cause, giving Being, and not receiving Being; and communicating all that relates to a perfect Being, and to the Government of all Things: And, farther, by not distinguishing between the different Attributes of the Son and Holy Spirit, and by not considering the Attributes that are communicated by the Trinity in Unity, to rational Creatures, and, in some Degree, to all Things.

The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are One God, and the God and Father of all created Things and Beings: But Personally in the Trinity, the Son is not the Father, though with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, is the God and Father of all created Things; and therefore *Isaiah* ix. 6, should be render'd, *of the mighty God, the Everlasting Father*, and thus we may avoid confounding the Personal and relative Attributes of the Trinity in Unity: And we should in that Verse distinguish between the divine and human Nature in Christ, express'd by *a Child is born*; and to say, that God was born of a Woman, and made Man, is a gross Error; and I must repeat, that God's Attribute of Immutability shews, that *John* i. 14, should not be, nay, cannot be, *made Flesh*, but as 1 *Tim.* iii. 16, *manifested, or made manifest in the Flesh*, as united with it, and operating in it.

And the divine Nature being immortal, could not suffer or die with the human Body, as some ignorantly teach; nor was it necessary that it should, if it were possible that it could die. And the two Natures being distinct, though united, not mix'd, the finite Virgin, born in Time, could not be (as some call her) the Mother of

an infinite and eternal God, but of the Man Christ *Jesus* only, as I have elsewhere proved at large ; and the uniting the Natures was fully sufficient to the End.

If the divine Nature was made Man, born, suffer'd, and dy'd in the Person of Christ, then the divine Nature, must both change, and be divided, and separated ; or the Father, and the Holy Spirit must be made Man, and dye ; But Immutability explodes the vain and absurd Conceit of God being made Man, suffering Death, and rising from the Grave. But God was made manifest in Man, *1 Tim.* iii. 16, and so *John* i. 14, should be render'd : But the Union of the divine and human Nature, was not mix'd or compounded, or changed on either Part, but are, ever were, and ever will remain, two distinct and different Natures in the Person of Christ. And to affirm that Bread, in the Lord's Supper, or Wine, is changed to the divine Nature of Christ, does not only depreciate, and is contrary to the one sufficient Sacrifice offered up by him to God, once for all, *Heb.* ix. 24 to 28, chap. x. 1 to 14, but is impious and idolatrous, as it is impossible to make a God of a Creature ; or for a Creature to become God. Transubstantiation in this Sense, is contrary to God's Self-Existence, Self-Sufficiency, Immutability, and Immortality, and to the Perfection of his Nature ; and to our Reason, and our Senses too. And though whilst we live on Earth, our Food is changed into our natural Substance ; it is very absurd to imagine, that the Bread and Wine is changed into Christ's human Nature, his Flesh and Blood, being spiritualized and glorified in Heaven ; and much less can Bread and Wine be changed to the divine Nature, nor the divine to creature Nature. The two Natures, are sometimes us'd as synonymous Terms, or one put for the other, as *Mat.* ix. 6, 7, and *Mt.* xx. 28, where the Word Christ is wanting, as ver. 24 shews, and leads into the Error of calling the Blood of Man, the Blood of God, but both ought to be explain'd in all Translations ; for God is a Spirit, and immutable, and cannot change to Flesh and Blood. And God, not the Church, is the Foundation and Pillar of Truth, *1 Tim.* iii. 15, nor the Apostles, but taught by them, *Eph.* ii. 20.

We should honour the Son, and Holy Ghost too, as we honour the Father, as he has communicated his Honour and Glory to them, but which should be express'd, as to the Trinity in Unity, of the One Only Deity ; for to say, *Glory be to God the Father, to God the Son, and to God the Holy Ghost*, is, in common Sense, Three Gods ; but *Glory be to God the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost*, is proper.

Our Lord and Saviour thought it sufficient to say, *in the Name of God the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, *Mat. xxviii. 19*, the one God mentioned *chap. xxvii. 46* ; and the Words are so plain as not to need explaining ; and who shall dare, or presume to add to his plain express Words, contrary to *Deut. iv. 2*, and not deserve the Curse denounced, *Rev. xxii. 18, 19*.

He taught us to pray to our Father, &c. which is the Trinity in Unity of one God, and so the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, the Father implicately, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit, is to be used, as in Unity of the Deity.

The Father is properly call'd God the Father, or God, implicately, as the Son and Holy Ghost are of him, and in him ; but as he is not of, but in and with them, One God, it is improper to call the Son, or Holy Ghost, Personally and particularly God ; and to say, *The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God*, is to say there are three Gods, at least to common Understanding ; and to be so express'd causes Error in Mens Ideas, and, as needless, should be disused. And to pray to God the Father, and to God the Son, and to God the Holy Ghost, each thus particulariz'd and separated, if it were not apparent Tritheism, it seems, in Idea, to divide and separate, the undivided and inseparable Trinity, which should always be mentioned in Unity as God, the One, and Only True God : And it is fully sufficient to express the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost to be One and the Only God. And it is needless, and erroneous, to pray to the Son as Mediator, *John xvi. 23, 24*, *chap. xiv. 13, 14*, or to the Holy Ghost as Intercessor in particular, *ver. 16, 17*, *Rom. chap. viii. 26, 27, 34*, and *ver. 9, to 26*. *Eph. ii. 18*, *chap. vi. 18*, *Jude 20*. And to pray to the Son of David, is to pray to the Man Christ Jesus, and
not

not to God ; and to give to Man the Glory that is due to God only, and though the divine and human Nature are mysteriously and really united, it is a central Union ; for the human Nature is distinct and different, not chang'd to the divine Nature, nor can become infinite, nor be expatiated throughout Immensity, and so be omnipresent, omniscient, and omni-audient, so not to be pray'd to : When he appear'd on Earth as Man, he might be pray'd to as the Son of *David* ; not only as one Man may pray to another, or to an Angel if he is visible to him, as he was to the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles, but as an Act of Faith, in believing in the *Messiah*.

So when *Stephen* saw Christ's human Nature in a Vision, in its central Union with the divine Nature, *Acts* vii. 55, 56, he pray'd to him, ver. 59, 60, not as God, but Lord *Jesus*, as being visible to him, to receive his Spirit ; and Lord *Jesus*, signifies the divine and human Nature united in the Trinity, and he call'd upon God, ver. 59, 60, distinctly, as the Trinity in Unity of the One Only True Deity.

Stephen saw in a Vision, Christ's human Nature united with his divine Nature, in an inexpressible Manner joyn'd in God, as a Trinity in Unity of the Deity, as *Acts* vii. 55 to 60, shews ; but we do not, as not having any such Visions.

Nor is *Luke* xvi. 24, 25, any Plea for praying to Saints, for in general *Abraham* is ignorant of us, *Isaiab* lxiii. 16, and as not omnipresent, and we know not when Saints have any particular Knowledge of us, or are permitted to come to us, except the Event of Things shew it.

And as Christ's human Nature is not omnipresent, nor omniscient, nor omni-audient, but distinct from the divine Nature, and not diffus'd and expatiated throughout Immensity, but centrally united with the divine Nature, we are not to pray to the human Nature ; no, nor to Christ's divine Nature Personally, for that includes the human Nature, as well as it divides in Idea the indivisible Trinity ; but we are to pray, as *St. Paul* did (*Eph.* i. 17, chap. ii. 18, chap. iii. 14, chap. v. 20) to the God, and Father, of our Lord *Jesus* Christ, who is the ever blessed Trinity in Unity, and our God and Father, and God over All, blessed for ever.

But the contrary Opinion having too much prevail'd, not only of praying to the Son, and Holy Spirit singly or separately, but also to Saints and Angels, though they are not omniscient, nor can be omnipresent; nor can the Human Nature of Christ, as being a central Union, for finite cannot expatiate to Immenfity. I shall therefore be more particular in proving the Mistake of praying to the Personalities of the Trinity separately, and that will obviate all Pretence for praying to Saints and Angels; or to pray to the Son or Holy Spirit, to pray to God the Father, as some ignorantly do, by mistaking the Nature of the Mediation and Intercession of the Son and Holy Spirit.

Some Sort of Comparisons may be made between the Creator and the Creature, especially as God made Man in his own Image, yet the Difference is infinitely great; as for Instance. The Essence of the Trinity is indivisible; but the Essence of Man is divided into innumerable separate Personalities; and therefore, from the Comparison which I made of King *Henry II.* and his associated Son, if it is alledged, that the Son was call'd King, and did receive Petitions separately.

I answer, Men have been called Gods, *Exod. vii. 1*, chap. xxii. 28, *Psal. lxxxii. 1, 6*, and *1 Cor. viii. 4, 5, 6*, Idols are called Gods, but in a different and inferior Sense; but we can't call the Son, and Holy Spirit, Gods Personally, but in the highest Sense; and so not without an Idea of Tritheism, especially to common Sense; and Things should be explain'd to the Edification of all Men, *1 Cor. xiv. 26*.

And if King *Henry Junior* had the Title of King, he had not Personally the Power of a King: And though he, in his Father's Absence, receiv'd Petitions relating to Government, he could not grant them alone.

But let us suppose King *Henry*, and his Sons *Henry*, and *Richard* associated with him in the Government, and always sitting together as joint Governors, and neither of them ever absent, wou'd it not be improper, and an Offence, to offer Petitions directed to either of the Sons singly, in the Father's Presence, and not having Power to grant them of themselves; and especially considering that each Person had equal Knowledge, Ability, Willingness, and

and Authority, and the Petitioner having equal Interest in each Person.

And does not the Omniscience and inseparable Omnipresence of the Trinity in Unity, not only make it needless and improper, to pray to one of the Personalities distinctly, personally, and separately? and, does it not give a wrong Idea of them, as if they were separated, and absent from each other? or, as if one were more inclinable than the others to favour our Suit; or, as if we had more Interest in one Person than in another? which must suppose them not to be exactly impartial, and to be imperfect Beings; for it is an Imperfection to be partial. But they act in all Things in Unity, Concord, and Harmony.

It is a different Thing to mention them distinctly as an Act of Knowledge, and Faith, and to express our understanding the Mystery of the Trinity, and to give Glory to each Person; and another Thing to pray to the Persons separately, they being in Unity the only one true Deity ever omnipresent and omniscient.

If it is objected, that the Mediation, and Intercession of the Son, and Holy Spirit, seem to imply, and claim, that we petition them Personally; I answer. Their Mediation and Intercession, is not like one Man's mediating between Persons of different Interests, and separate from each other; or interceding in behalf of one Man to another that is more concern'd, or has other Interests in the Case, than the Intercessor; for their Mediation, and Intercession is not to the Father only, but to themselves jointly with the Father, as one God: And though there is a Personal Super-Eminence, and a Sort of Supremacy in God the Father, yet by his entire Communication of his inseparable Essence, Authority, and Power to them, in the Government of all created Things and Beings, they enjoy and exercise it equally with him.

And their Mediation and Intercession are only Terms denoting a mediate and immediate Act in God's providential Government, as it does in Creation, from the primordial Cause and Act; by the mediate and immediate joint Cause and Act. And, as Things were produced gradually from a primordial by a mediate, and through an immediate, but joint, efficient, and effectual Cause
and

and Act ; so do the Acts of God's Dispensations and Government proceed in all Effects. And the Texts of Scripture that mention Mediation and Intercession, imply, Effects, and not Words, as us'd by Men in Arbitration, and only denote the Manner of Acting. *1 Tim.* ii. 5, with ver. 3, *Heb.* viii. 6, chap. ix. 15, chap. xii. 24, with ver. 22, 23, and *Gal.* iii. 19, 20, refer to, and express Christ's Merits, and their Effects that plead for Mercy, and not Words ; and *Rom.* viii. 26, neither does nor can mean the Sighs and Groans of the Holy Spirit, who is impassible, and cannot feel Pain ; and all that is, or can be meant by Intercession, is his guiding and directing our Spirits in Prayer, according to the Will of God, and making our Prayers effectual, by explaining for us, and understanding the Sighs and Groans of a disconsolate Soul, in the Agonies of Grief, which can't be utter'd, or express'd by Words, as the preceding Words, *helping our Infirmities*, shews ; that is, by his immediate Operation, &c. and as ver. 23 and 27, and *2 Cor.* v. 2, 4, confirms. And the Spirit searcheth and knoweth the Heart and Mind of Man, as well as all Things, even the deep Things of God, *1 Sam.* xvi. 7, *1 Chron.* xxviii. 9, *Psal.* vii. 9, *Jer.* xi. 20, *Acts* i. 24, *Rev.* ii. 23, *1 Cor.* ii. 10 ; and he makes our Prayers effectual to us, as *1 Cor.* vi. 11, *2 Cor.* i. 2, 3, chap. iii. 3, 4, chap. v. 18 to 21, *Eph.* i. 3, 16, 17, 20, chap. ii. 10, chap. iii. 14, 20, 21, chap. v. 18, 20, *1 Thes.* v. 9, *1 Pet.* iii. 12 ; and is in nothing like Man's Mediation and Intercession, and does not imply Man's praying to them Personally in particular, or their praying to God the Father. And what I have before said, of praying and interceding, giving and receiving, sending and going, are explain'd by what I here say of the personal Degrees in the Deity, of the mediate and immediate Cause, as proceeding and acting from the primordial Cause ; and as recurring to it in all Works and Acts of the Deity.

Christ as Man, whilst on Earth, prayed to God the Father ; for in that Sense, the Father was superior, *John* xiv. 28, and in Personality too, *John* xvii. 5, as before shewn ; though by the Father's Communication of his immutable Essence, and communicable Attributes, the Son is in Essence and Government equal, as chap. x. 30 shews, and so is the Holy Spirit. Christ's Prayer, *Mat.* xxvi. 39,
and

and ch. xxvii. 46, was entirely as Man, but, *John* xiv. 16, and ch. xvii. 10, was in both his Natures, as ver. 5 and other Texts shew, whilst in his Humiliation, chap. xvi. 28; but after the Exaltation of his Human Nature, and the visible reinstating of his Divine Nature, he says, he will not pray to God the Father; which Term implies the Trinity in Unity; and chap. xvi. 26, 27, shews the Reason why he does not: And he says, they shall not pray to him personally, ver. 25 to 28, but in his Name, to God, *i. e.* to the Trinity in Unity, as chap. xiv. 7 to 17, and chap. x. 30 denotes; nor are we to pray to the Holy Spirit personally, but to the Trinity in Unity, for the Holy Spirit, *Psalms* li. 10, 11, 12, *John* xiv. 16, 17; and to pray to the Holy Spirit, for the Holy Spirit, must needs be improper, except he was, as Man is, a separate Person, and not associated, or not coparcenary with any other Person.

Angels are in some Sort our personal Guardians in particular, *Psalms* xci. 11, *Mat.* xviii. 10, and of Kingdoms in general, *Dan.* xii. 1, but it is at some Times only, and on some extraordinary Occasions, *Mat.* iv. 11, chap. xiii. 41, chap. xxiv. 31, chap. xxviii. 2, *Luke* i. 19, 26, 38, chap. ii. 9, 10, 15, chap. xvi. 22, chap. xxii. 43, *John* v. 4, *Acts* x. 3, 22, chap. xii. 7 to 11, and many Texts in both Old and New Testaments shew, that they are not always with us; but when sent to execute God's Commands, they fly as swift as Thought to do his Pleasure, *Psalms* xxxiv. 7, *Psalms* ciii. 20, 23, so need not be pray'd to, nay, we are forbid to worship or pray to them, *Col.* ii. 18, or to any Creature, but to God only, *John* xvi. 23, *Rev.* xix. 10, chap. xxii. 8, 9: And, *Zach.* i. 12, *Dan.* chap. viii. to chap. xii. does not prove that Angels are always with us, nor is it necessary, *Isaiab* xlviii. 11: If we saw them, we might make such Requests to them as we do to Men, but not else; for when we do not see them, we know not when they are with us, till by the Effects, it is perceived that they have been with us; and they are finite and so not omnipresent, nor omniscient, 1 *Pet.* i. 12, *Deut.* xxix. 29; and God's Omnipresence and Omniscience forbids us to pray to them; and it would dishonour God to do it, who will not give his Glory to Creatures, *Isaiab* xlii. 8. *Gen.* xlviii. 16, is praying to God our Redeemer, by Christ the Angel of his Presence, and of the Cove-

Covenant. *Rev.* i. 4, chap. ii. 26, 27, chap. v. 8, chap. viii. 4, is no Plea for praying to Angels or Saints ; no, the Angels forbid it, *Rev.* xix. 10, chap. xxii. 8, 9 ; and *2 Cor.* i. 11, Prayer is desir'd of Men who live in this World ; and as, *1 Tim.* ii. 1 directs, we ought to pray for all Men ; and though *Abraham* was appointed to converse with *Dives*, *Luke* xvi. 23 to 31, that is but a Particular ; in general he is ignorant of us, *Isaiah* lxiii. 16, so not to be pray'd to.

As God the Father, in the first Person, communicated his Essence, Honour, and Supremacy over all the Creation, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, *John* v. 22, 23, *Acts* v. 3, 4, *1 Cor.* ii. 10, we must, and ought to render all Glory to *God the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost*, and to do all religious solemn Acts, *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, *Mat.* xxviii. 19, jointly, not separately. But to say, *in the Gloria Patria, As it was from the Beginning* (of our World's Creation) falls short of giving all due Praise and Glory to the Eternal God, who ever was eternally glorify'd, before our World's Creation, as well as he ever will be to all Eternity, after our World's Destruction, Dissolution, and Renovation ; therefore we ought to say, *Glory, &c. As it was from all Eternity, &c.*

The uniting the Divine and Human Nature in Christ, is necessary to fill up the Chasm between God and Creature, *Eph.* i. 10, *John* xvii. 21, 22, 23 ; and the Sacrifice of the human Nature, in him that sinned not, is the only Way to satisfy Divine Justice, and to restore Man to God's Favour, from which he fell, by the Misuse of his Free-Will, given him as necessary to his Being ; and by his Disobedience of God's Commands given him for his Safety and Happiness ; sinful Man being undeserving God's Mercy, and unable of himself to satisfy Divine Justice, or to merit God's Favour : For Divine Justice has Respect both to God, whom we have most highly offended, and also to Justice amongst all Mankind, and between Man and Man, as all Men are God's Children, Subjects, and Servants ; and therefore he will have Justice done to all in the final End. And as sinful Man is unable to do this, Christ alone, and he only, who sinned not, can do it. And the most Equitable Terms for all Men, is true Repentance

penitance with Respect to both God and Man; and to have true Faith in Christ's Merits, and a grateful Acknowledgment of his wonderful Love, and compassionate Tenderness in suffering for our Offences, in making the Attonement to God, and accomplishing a full Reconciliation, both with Respect to God and Man, and in restoring us to God's favour.

But as Want of Repentance, and Reconciliation, is Want of Acceptance of Christ's gracious Terms; such obstinate Non-Acceptants, as will neither be reconcil'd to God or Man, nor forgive each other, but continue to hate God, and their Fellow-Creatures; such Men must needs want the benign Effects of Christ's Merits, and must suffer a just and dreadful Punishment, from the omnipotent offended God.

The Want of distinguishing rightly, between the divine and human Nature of Christ, makes some attribute all, or too much, to his human Nature; and others confound both together, or assert, That the divine Nature, which is immutable, chang'd to human Nature, and was born, suffer'd, and dy'd: And yet, some who assert this Error, affirm, That Man's intellectual spiritual Soul is not generated by the Parent, but convey'd into its elemental Substance, at the Time of the Mother's quickning, or at the Birth; but the Union of the divine and human Nature in Christ, was a real Union, but without Mixture, or Confusion of Substance, or any Change in the divine Nature; and as to Christ's Merits, both Natures joyn'd in it, but so as to have each Office, Act, and Operation, distinct: And most certainly the chief and greatest Part is to be attributed to the divine Nature.

The Son's two Natures are often distinguished by the different Terms of Son of God, and Son of Man; and to shew their uniting in his Person, they are often synonymously put one for the other: But we ought carefully to distinguish them to be, as they really are, two distinct Natures in one Person.

God is Life, and the Fountain of all Life, and he preserves Life, and redeems, and raises, and restores Life from Death, *Psalms* xxxvi. 9. *Psalms* lxvi. 9. *Psalms* cxxxiii. 4, *John* i. 3, 4, ch. v. 26, chap. vi. 27, 33, 35, 44, 51, 54 to 63, chap. viii. 12, chap. xi. 25, & *John* i. 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 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Acts xvii. 25, 29, *1 Cor.* chap. xv. *Psalms* xxxiii. 6, *Job* xxxiii. 4, *Gen.* ii. 7.

And it is as contrary to Philosophy, as to Scripture, to imagine that God made all Things of nothing; the only Text that is quoted for it, plainly proves against it; for, *Heb.* xi. 3, does not say, that God made all Things or any Thing of nothing, but of Things that don't appear to human Sight; and that is, the effluated spirated, or out-breathed multiforming spiritous Breath of God ever flowing externally from the divine immutable Essence of the Trinity in Unity of the Deity; gradually proceeding, and as being the Effluvia of the immutable Essence, continually proceeding by external and gradual Effluatation, it separates from the divine Essence, and gradually changes, and spontaneously and prolifically produces a gradual Concatenation of infinite Variety, different in Degrees both of Dimension and Perfection, all link'd together without a Chasin, or irregular Space, or Gap, or Flaw in Nature. But the divine Effluvia, when separated from the divine Essence, by external Effluatation, and Part changing by specifying various Creatures, makes a Chasm between God and Creature, which must needs be, and is fill'd up, by a central Union, between God and Creature, in the Person of Christ, whose divine Nature is the middle Person or Medium in the Trinity; and his human Nature the Mean in the Creatures between the angelical, intellectual, spiritual Nature, and the irrational, animal Nature, by which God's Work is perfected, and the rational Creature fully satisfy'd, and all compleated, *John* i. 16, chap. iii. 19, *Eph.* i. 10 to 23, *Col.* i. 19, 20, and ver. 15 to 28, chap. ii. 2, *1 John* i. 1 to 4, *John* xvii. 21, 22, 23. And it is absurd to imagine, that God being Life, and the Fountain of Life, should breathe a Breath of Life that came from, and was made of nothing, *Gen.* i. 27, chap. ii. 7.

God did not make the Image of himself, which he implanted in Man, and is the superior Part of Man, of nothing, though not of his own Essence; nor was it the general Effluvia infused into him, in the common Way, by which he gave Life to the brute Animals, as *Gen.* i. 20, 24, *Psalms* xxxiii. 6, but of the Excellence of the divine Effluvia, immediately breathed from God into Man,

Man, *Gen.* i. 26, 27, and chap. ii. 7, *Job* xxxiii. 4, which is Man's intellectual spiritual Soul plac'd in his elemental Body ; nor did God unite the divine Nature with a Nature made of nothing, in the Person of Christ, no more than breathe a Breath of Life from nothing ; for then that something made of nothing, would be an Addition to the Imminity of his divine Nature, which is impossible : But that wrong Notion of nothing, is an Inlet to many gross and ridiculous Absurdities. The Spirit returns to God, *Eccles.* xii. 7, from whence it proceeded, to Man, to whom he gave it.

The Union of the Soul and Body in Man is a faint Emblem of the Union of the divine and human Nature in Christ ; they are distinct, not mix'd, nor inseparable till their Reunion, when the Body is rarify'd and refin'd to Spirit : But it actuates the Body now, and the Body is dead and unactive without it. As the Soul is spiritual, it can subsist without the elemental Body ; and as it is intellectual, it can know, and understand, and enjoy intellectual Pleasure ; and so can live and be happy in a separate State, whilst the Body is resolv'd to Earth : But Man's Being will be most compleat, when the Body is reviv'd and chang'd to Spirit, and reunited with the Soul in one spiritual Being, and be then inseparable for ever.

If it be asked how we know that there are any such Things as speciflicated, dimensionary, spiritual Bodies, that can, and do individually live and act, without being united with elemental Bodies ?

I answer, The Spirit is evidently Life, and gives Life and Motion to the elemental Body of Flesh, and without the Spirit in Man, the Body is dead, motionless, and corruptible, but can be revived by the Spirit, as well as at first receive Life from it. Therefore that which is Life, and gives Life to elemental Bodies, can, and does live free from them, and in a better State than when it is in, and united with them ; though Man will be most perfect, when his elemental Body, that was made of Spirit by Condensation, &c. shall be rarify'd to Spirit (as we see all elemental Things are by Fire, and Fire resolved with them to the Spirit of Air, and not to nothing) ; and when our Souls and Bodies are reunited in one spiritual Body, God can and will preserve them entire and inseparable

rable in one Body for ever, which must needs be the Completion of our innate Happiness.

But we have many corroborating Evidences of Spirits and spiritual Substances subsisting, without, and free from elemental Substances.

God is a pure Spirit, invisible to elemental dense Natures; and Angels are of a spiritual Nature, invisible to us, except by some Means different from, and superior to our Natures; and when they are enrob'd in some visible Phenomena, are not tangible, though they touch us, and make Impressions on us, but vanishes out of our Sight, as soon as their Message is deliver'd to Man.

And God having fix'd his Rule of Providence with Respect to us, he keeps in general to the Exercise of it in a common Course, or stated Order and Method of his Superintendency over us. But as he at first revealed himself by the Agency of an Angel in a visible Appearance, and promulg'd his Laws to Mankind, and has occasionally repeated them, by visible Appearances, or by visionary Raptures, or by verbal Dictates in Dreams; and now, to keep Men from Infidelity, and not to reveal any new Thing in Religion, he does in every Age appoint some extraordinary Appearances, or Sounds, and sometimes audible Voices, above the Nature of Man to perform. But, by a Sort of Legerdemain, Falstity has ever been mimicking Truth, and the many Imposters that have been in every Age, have created in many People a Diffidence and Incredulity of well prov'd Realities. But it is a great Folly to disbelieve all Realities, because there are many Imposters. And as God is now invisible to us, and that Angels in their own Natures are so too, we are not to expect that God should frequently act out of the ordinary Course of his Providence, and command Angels frequently to assume an Appearance visible to us: And it is a strange Vanity to expect that they should appear to every Man, or because they do not, to be so incredulous, as not to believe any Thing but what they see. If they could appear to all Men at once, it would be contrary to Man's appointed Nature in this Life to have it so; it would then make us another Part of infinite Variety, and not the same Part that we now are in this Life fix'd in, and break the gradual Concatenation that is in all Things

in universal Nature ; or else God must have made us some other Sort of Creatures, and why not inferior as well as superior.

God in Wisdom hath absolutely predestinated our State of Being, neither to be Angels nor Brute Creatures, but Men, in high Degrees of Wisdom, near to Angels, and gradually lower down to Idiots, near to Brutes : But God did not absolutely predestinate either Angel or Man to Eternal Torments, as some Men blasphemously and diabolically affirm ; nor to any predetermine Period of Time, or Degree of Torment : But by his Covenant made with Man, (*Gen. ii. 16, 17*, and so doubtless with Angels) he rewards and punishes Man, and all rational Creatures, in Justice, according to their good or evil Use of their Free-Will, and to their Obedience or Disobedience of his Commands made for their Safety and Happiness only.

Revelation, as to Laws and Ordinances of Religion, ceas'd when the Holy Spirit had fully instructed the Holy Apostles.

But to revive Men's dying Faith, God has, doubtless, in every succeeding Age, super-added to the ordinary Course of his Providence, Things miraculous, though the many pretended Miracles, impos'd on the Credulous, by vain-glorious, and wicked Men, makes some true Miracles suspected.

And Apparitions of Ghosts, both of Persons dead, and of Appearances of the exact Form and Figure of some Persons whilst living, and being many Miles distant, have appear'd to Persons of the greatest Veracity, and not only to single Persons but to many Persons of very good Credit together, at the same Time, as they have solemnly attested, many of which are upon authentick Record, and some of which have been averr'd to me by Persons of undoubted Veracity, and free from Superstition, or any self-interested Design : For my own Part, I have often found suddain Thoughts and evil Emotions, that seem'd to be swiftly darted into my Mind from without me, and to which I have had no immediate Incitement, or Promptitude, from within ; either from Lust, Passion, or Interest ; but which, if I had not instantly resisted, and repulsed, might, and certainly would have soon engaged my Sences,

Sences, Appetites, Affections, and Resolutions to have comply'd with, and approv'd of, and acted, by those deluding Excitements to Evil: And these suddain extra Offers to tempt to Evil, must certainly be extra Evil Spirits, by which God tries our Faith, Virtue, Equity, and Piety; as well as those internal Promptitudes, which we apparently find issue from Lust, Appetite, Pride, Avarice, or any other Vice.

But I thank God, I have also often had as suddain Emotions, to pious and virtuous Words and Acts; and, I doubt not, but all who make due Observations, do experience the same. And these Intimations must needs be made by Good or Evil Spirits from without us; and it is our Duty and Interest, to entertain, and follow all good Motions, and to resist and repulse all evil ones, at their first Appearance to our intellectual Minds. And in what does or can the Body of Flesh assist the intellectual Spirit, in Dreams, in the Imagination of seeing as clear a Light as the Noon Day, when we are in the Dark and asleep, or in hearing audible Voices of Persons speaking, or in reading Books distinctly, as we verily think, and seem in Reality to do, in our Dreams, as certainly, and as perfectly, as when we are awake, and in the Light.

From all which, there is no Reason to object to, or doubt of the Soul's separate State of Life, after the Body's Death, and whilst it remains in the Grave. It is one necessary Part of infinite Variety; and is a Medium in Man's Nature, between his first, and final State of Being, of which, his Infancy, Manhood, and the Wisdom of old Age is an Emblem. And in the Womb, Man's Animal Body is, of an Egg, first form'd into a Sort of Worm, and next to a perfect Form of Man, which hath more than a vegetive Life, and then has perceptible Motion, and from the Act of Generation, had the Seed of his intellectual Soul, as well, as of his animal Body. A Fly is of an Egg, first a Worm, then a Caterpillar, and then a Fly; and all Animals have three different States.

Infinite Wisdom is seen in the smallest Things as well as in the greatest, and without infinite Variety, the Work would have been imperfect: And such Things as self-conceited Ignorants call foolish, do explode and confute their vainly fancy'd Wisdom, 1 Cor. i. 27; and not wise Men,

Men, but Fools only, despise to consider the least and meanest Things ; by which, as well as by the greatest, we may find Emblems of Man's final Perfection.

And we see Emblems of a Resurrection in some Animals as well as Vegetives, though it is true, the Animals are either not dissolved or resolved to Dust : But when the Bodies of some Animals have been dead, shrunk, and dry'd, they have been reviv'd ; and in some that don't dry, but corrupt, and so change their Form, other Creatures, various Insects have spontaneously been bred in them, and spontaneous Productions are Evidences of Creation ; and God can as well raise Man's Body from Dust, as he first form'd it of Dust, and resolve it to Dust ; and as well preserve Life eternally, as one Century, or one Year, Day, Hour, Minute, or Moment. And God who makes innumerable Forms, out of the same Original Matter, of greater and lesser Dimensions, and different Degrees of Perfection, and brings some Things to Perfection instantly, and others by gradual Degrees, in a long Series of Time ; and fixes some Things, and changes others ; and sooner, or later, destroys the Forms of many Things ; can renovate, reform, or change their Forms to a lower State, or preserve them, or exalt them to higher Degrees of Perfection.

And as the Completion of Man's Being, by the Resurrection of his Body spiritualiz'd and reunited, is so perfected, it is most agreeable to God's Attributes, and to the Completion of infinite Variety, that it should be so ; and that the Soul and Body should be separated for a Time, and then be reunited.

But Generation is an Emblem of Destruction, of Death, and Resurrection, and of different and separated States of the same Creatures, and of Mens different and separate States of Being too ; as I have shewn, that a Fly is first from Seed an Egg, then a Worm, a Multipede or Caterpillar, and then a Fly ; and that is its final Perfection, and shews different States of Being.

And Man's elemental and animal Body is first from Seed an Egg, then a Worm, and then has an animal Body, but that is not his present full Perfection ; he has evidently a spiritual and intellectual Soul, which can live without its elemental Body, and is not in its final Perfection,

tion, till it is first freed from its animal Body, and has that Body refin'd to Spirit, and reunited with it in one spiritual Body.

And as the Seed of Animals, as well as Vegetives, first dies, and then revives; and as its generated Product several Times changes its Form and Nature too, (for a Worm lives in a different Nature, and acts in a different Manner, before it is transformed to a more perfect Creature); the due Consideration of this Case leaves no Room for meer implicit Faith, in the Belief of Man's different and separate State of Soul and Body, and of the Resurrection of his Body from Death to spiritual Life, and Reunion with its Soul in one spiritual Body. As it was form'd of Dust, it may be rais'd from Dust, and refin'd to Spirit, as well as from Spirit be condensed to Dust, *Gen.* ii. 7, and from Flesh resolve to Dust, *Eccles.* xii. 7.

The Wisdom and Power of God is as much seen in the smallest Insect, as in the greatest Animal, or in greater Works of Nature. And thus small Things confute the fancy'd Wisdom of self-conceited Ignorants, and shews their Folly, and are useful Informations, and necessary Instructions to all that desire to be truly wise, and eternally happy; as Happiness is annexed to Wisdom, and wilful Folly must needs tend to Misery and Ruin, *1 Cor.* i. 18 to 31.

God made Man's intellectual Mind or Soul a spiritual Substance, in his own Image, as a Trinity in Unity, *Gen.* i. 26, 27, as the Terms *let there be*, and *let us*, denote, it being an Act of Consultation and Consent in the Trinity, not of Command, as *be it is*; but the Consent is the *fiat* or Command, efficiently and effectually operating and effecting all Things; and God breathed into him the Breath of Life, and so made him a Living Soul; and he form'd his Body of the Elements of which Earth and Dust is compos'd, Fire and Water being in Earth; and the Elements were not made of nothing, but are Spirit condens'd, and which we see is rarify'd to Spirit, and is not annihilated; for if it were, then Mens Bodies blown into Air by Gun-Powder, would be annihilated; and Ashes are in Part, and may be wholly consum'd and rarify'd to the Spirit of Air, but not to nothing; and there are many Absurdities and gross Errors arise from

from the childish Fancy, of all Things being made of nothing.

God's prolifick, productive, and creative Nature did not want any Thing, whereof to make his numerous Works; nor did he unite the divine Nature with a Nature made of nothing: No, all Things were made of, and by his Effluvia, or spirative Breath, eternally and externally spirated or effluated, *Psal.* xxxiii. 6, *Job* xxxiii. 4, *Gen.* ii. 7.

Man's primary Nature being chang'd, his intellectual Spirit suffers by Grief, Sorrow, and Anxiety of Mind, as his animal Spirit suffers Sickneſs, and Pain in the Fleſh; and Chriſt as Man, ſuffer'd Grief and Pain in the utmoſt Exceſs, *Luke* xii. 50, chap. xxii. 44; but *Eph.* iv. 30, *Heb.* iii. 10, *Pſalm* xcv. 10, is not to be taken in a literal Senſe, but in a Senſe denoting God's infinite Love, Compaſſion, and tender Concern for Man's Unhappineſs, cauſ'd by the ill Uſe of his Free-Will; with which noble Quality God endu'd him for his Safety, Welfare, and Happineſs; and without which, he would have been an unintelligent, ſenſeleſs, Machine, void of Knowledge, and of the Uſe of Thought, Act, and of all Satisfaction in Being.

But when Angels and Men have paſt their Time of Tryal and Probation, and are by that made perfect, *Heb.* v. 8, 9, 1 *Pet.* i. 6 to 11, chap. iv. 19, chap. v. 10, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 9, 10, 12, through the Grace of God, 2 *Cor.* xii. 9, 10, and *John* xvii. 23; and when in Heaven; then their Wills and Deſires, and their Acts and Deeds, will be preſerved by God's Power, from all Irrectitude, Imperfection, Error, and Evil: But till then, it is neceſſary as the Means of attaining to Perfection, (which muſt be gradually) that Man ſhould be left more entirely to the free Uſe of his Will, without the plenary Aſſiſtance of the Divine Power: But God now affords his Grace in great Meaſure, if deſerv'd and well us'd by us.

But we muſt farther obſerve, from God's making Man in his own Image, and to give us a true Idea of the Union of the divine and human Nature in the Perſon of Chriſt our Lord, that as the Soul and Body of Man, is ſeparable and ſeparated at his Body's Death, and to be reunited inſeparably at his Body's Reſurrection and ſpiritual Creation; ſo the divine and human Nature of Chriſt, as well

as his human Soul and Body, were separable, and not inseparable till his Resurrection and Ascension to Heaven, *Mat.* xxvii. 46. 'The Divine Nature separated, so as not to suffer with the Human Nature, but accompany'd it to Hell, to begin Christ's Triumph over Hell and the Devil. And as we are called *the Temple of God*, and of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, which dwells in us, except we are Reprobates, and cause him to depart from us, *1 Cor.* iii. 16, *2 Cor.* xiii. 5, *Psaln* lv. 11 ; and as our new Birth of Regeneration, is not to enter the Womb, but is a spiritual Birth ; and as that which is born of the Flesh is Flesh, and profits nothing, till spiritualized at the Resurrection of our Bodies, *Jehn* iii. 3 to 6, and chap. vi. 63, *1 Cor.* xv. 22, 44, 45, 50, 51, 52, 53, so the Image of God in us in our Regeneration, being an Emblem of the Union of Christ's Divine and Human Nature ; and as the Divine Nature is infinite, immutable, immortal, and inseparable, so it is most agreeable to God's Attributes, that the Divine Nature, though it centers in every Thing, was not born in the Womb, but united with the Human Nature in Christ, in a real and effectual Manner, though at first separable, as Man's Soul and Body are separated, and reunited inseparably at his Ascension ; as Man's Soul and Body will be, at its Resurrection and Glorification in Heaven ; and to imagine that the Divine Nature was changed to Flesh, generated, conceived, and born in the Womb, and did suffer an Agony of Grief, Pain, and Death, as Man's Flesh does, is to confound the Divine and Human Nature, and is expressly contrary to God's Immutability, and to all his Holy Attributes, and to the Perfection of his Nature, and his infinite and unalterable Happiness.

And to say that God was made Man, and that Immortality suffer'd and died, is absurd, impious, and blasphemous : But to say, that by uniting the Divine and Human Nature in Christ, he is our *Emanuel*, or God manifested in him, in the Human Nature, is the Truth ; and *John* i. 14 should be express'd as it is in *1 Tim.* iii. 16.

As we can't fully understand the least Particle of elemental Matter, much less can we of invisible spiritual Matter or Substance ; so it would be great Folly to disbelieve the Union of Christ's divine and human Nature, be-
cause

cause we can't fully understand it : We sufficiently understand elemental Matter, by artificial Experiments, and spiritual Matter by its Effects ; but God only can fully understand all Things.

We can't certainly tell how the Union of our Souls and Bodies are made in all Respects ; but it is a vain Fancy to think the Body only, and its animal Spirits are generated, and that the pure intellectual Soul is infus'd into a contaminate Body : And how can we, consistent with God's Attributes, imagine, that God does create every Soul (which, as coming from him, must needs be pure) and put them into impure Bodies ? And if so, Men are not properly the instrumental Parents of their Children, but of Part of them only.

But though Mens Souls and Bodies are generated by their Parents, it is no Plea for Christ's divine Nature being generated as our Souls are ; nor was his human Nature generated by Man, but God, who created *Adam* without a Woman, and made the Woman of him, caused a Virgin to bear a Son without a Man, and united the divine and human Nature in Christ, in a Manner inscrutable to us ; but of which the Union of Spirit and Element is an Emblem, and which we have sufficient Reason to believe, from the Consideration of the infinite, gradual, concatenate Variety of Things in the Universe ; and the Necessity of filling up the Chasm between God and rational Creatures, to give them entire Satisfaction in their Being.

Christ's divine and human Nature had each a distinct and different Office : As Man, he suffer'd ; and as the eternal Son of God, and by his divine Power, he destroys Death and the Power of the Devil, and opens Heaven that was shut against us, and graciously receives us to Glory.

But the divine Nature could not suffer, nor was it necessary, if it could suffer ; for *Rom. v. 18*, with ver. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, to 21, shews, that as to suffering, the Sufferings of Christ's human Nature was sufficient ; as by the Offence of one Man Sin enter'd into the World, and all Men sin, so Judgment came upon all Men, of Condemnation to Death ; and so by the perfect Righteousness of one Man, the free Gift came upon all Men to Justification and Life eternal. But every Man is guilty of his own Sin only,

or of others as he may have caused, enticed, or induced them to sin, or in partaking of their Sins; and as *Rom. v. 12* shews, that if all Men did not sin, they should not die in a condemn'd Sense; and ver. 19, says, By the Disobedience of one, all were, of natural Consequence, involved in a Proneness or Inclination to Sin; and all do sin, yet are not guilty of *Adam's* Original Sin: For though one Man's Offence was the Cause of sinful Nature being generated to Posterity, ver. 15, yet his Posterity were not, nor could be the Cause, but are the Effect of that Sin; and we must carefully distinguish between the divine and human Nature, wherever mentioned, as synonymous Terms, as *1 Cor. xv. The second Man is the Lord from Heaven*, which means, that the Lord from Heaven united with the second *Adam*, but could not change the divine Nature; and so not be made, or become Man, but united only with human Nature; and which human Nature, and not the divine Nature, suffer'd for all true Penitents; and by being united to the divine Nature, exalts Men above Angels.

If Christ's Divine and Human Nature were so united at his Birth, and in his Life, as to make it impossible for him, as Man, to sin, there could not be the same Merit in his living free from Sin, as it would have been in *Adam*, in his unfallen State, to have kept himself, thro' his whole Time of Tryal, free from Sin; nor could there be any Merit at all in not sinning, if it were impossible to sin. *Adam* was as liable to sin, as he was able to avoid sinning before his Fall, though not prone to sin as he was after his Fall.

But it must needs be a gross Error in Papists, to say, That the blessed Virgin was so sanctify'd in the Womb, as to be free from Sin: Had she not sinned, but had born Christ in a sinless State, it would have depreciated Christ's Merits as Man, in not sinning: And if she had not been fallible and frail, but wholly free from Error or Evil, our Saviour would not have so reprov'd her, *Luke ii. 48, 49, John ii. 3, 4*, which with *Mat. xii. 47 to 50*, are spoke as a plain Prohibition to worship her, though she is blessed in a much higher Degree than any other Saint or Creature. It is true, the blessed Virgin's Mistakes are not to be called Sins, but they shew that she was not infallible,

ble, and so was liable to Sin, and, doubtless, had a Propensity to Evil, which she vanquished, as well, or better than other Saints, though Sin is not imputed to them after true Repentance, *Rom.* iv. 7, 8.

As there is a gradual concatenate Mysteri in all Things, from the least to the greatest and most excellent Thing in the Creation, so the filling up the Chasm between God and Creature, by uniting the Divine and Human Nature in the Person of Christ, must needs be the greatest Mysteri; the Design, Manner, and End of which is described *2 Cor.* v. 14 to 19, *Eph.* ii. 16, *Col.* i. 19, 20, *Rom.* viii. 32 to 39. And does not this Reconciliation shew, that rational Creatures, and in Affliction, are especially apt to be dissatisfy'd with God's Providence; and that if the vast Chasm between God and Creature, was not filled up in Christ, *Eph.* i. 10, *John* xvii. 21, 22, 23, no rational Creature could be satisfy'd, or think himself happy: And had not Christ, as Man, suffered infinitely more in Mind and Body, than ever any Man or Creature did in Life, how should Man be always or ever fully free from Complaint, that God should cause us to be born in a State of Suffering; but it must needs be, that without a contrary Extream, in the fullest Degree, we could never rightly estimate, and truly value, and so not fully enjoy perfect Happiness in Heaven, to all Eternity, *Rom.* viii. 18 to 23, but must have been as insensible Machines, if we did not intuitively or experimentally know Good from Evil in all their various gradual Degrees: And as some rational Creatures (as a necessary Part of infinite Variety) must know experimentally the Difference between Good and Evil, why should we expect to be exempt, when the Holy Angels had a Time of Tryal, in which having kept themselves from doing Evil, they are preserved for ever from suffering Evil; and Man, by avoiding to do Evil, or repenting of it, may be ever free from Evil in Heaven, and enjoy perfect Happiness to all Eternity: And the Chasm between God and Creature shews, that the Extream could not be otherways full and compleat, and the Chasm filled up, so as to give rational Creatures entire Satisfaction in their Being, but by the Union of Natures in the Person of Christ: The Manner of it must needs be the greatest of all Mysteries; and must be
very

very different from the mysterious Manner, of the Union of the intellectual spiritual Soul, and elemental Body in one Man : But as the Union of Man's Soul and Body, is self-evident and certain, but yet a great Mystery how it is done, we have from hence sufficient and all imaginable Reason, agreeable to God's Attributes of Benignity, in restoring fallen Man ; to believe the Union of the Divine and Human Nature in Christ, so as to leave no Room for implicit Belief in that Article of Faith.

That it was a real and perfect Union, must needs be true ; and it must needs be as true, that the Human Nature was left as free to act as Man in Christ, as in other Men, and not being otherways over-ruled by the divine Power, than Mankind are by God's Grace and Holy Spirit.

God is pleased, by his Holy Spirit, to dwell in us Sinners, and to make us his Habitation, if we endeavour to purify ourselves from Sin, and don't, by Wickedness, cause the Holy Spirit to depart from us. By which we are to understand the extraordinary effectual Operation of the Spirit : For God being immense, his Holy Spirit is essentially every where, and acts universally every where, and centrally in every Thing, in an ordinary or common Manner ; but acts in a different Manner in many Particulars and Things ; and in many Particulars, does not act in us, in a Manner perceivable to us, otherways than by the ordinary Acts of his good Providence. And we are not to expect any extraordinary Revelations, of new Doctrines or Laws of God, they being fully compleated, and finally confirmed, and effectually ratify'd, by our blessed Lord and Saviour ; and by the extraordinary Mission of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles : But the more than common Operations of the Holy Spirit, that we are to pray and hope for, is, to understand God's Will aright, and to enable us to obey his Holy Laws, and to live in Virtue, Morality, and true Piety. And to do the Will of God, is the only Way to obtain and preserve the more than ordinary Efficacy of the Holy Spirit ; and the not doing his Will (by not endeavouring to obey it) is the Cause of his ceasing to operate in us in a more than ordinary Manner ; as in our Creation, Generation, Preservation, and constant Action in an ordinary Manner (but not in Evil and Wicked-

Wickedness); and this is done continually, without the extraordinary Efficacy of the Holy Spirit.

But the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, gives us but a feint Idea, of the Union of the Divine and Human Nature in Christ; but it is sufficient to exact our Belief of that important Truth, rationally; and so does the Union of our Souls and Bodies, so as to leave no Room, for a meer implicit Belief of it. And it must needs be, that the Divine Nature united with the Human Nature in Christ, at his being generated, and in his Conception and Birth, and in his Life, to his Body's Death; and then, with his Human Soul, was separated from his Body, and descended with it to Hell; but in such a Manner, as not to suffer with it, but to begin Christ's Conquest over the Devil; and it reunited with the Body at his Resurrection, and ascended with it to Heaven, and is eternally inseparable from it. But in this Union the Divine Nature was not changed to Flesh, nor to Man's human Soul, so was not born, nor suffer'd, nor died.

But whether Christ, as Man, was born only liable to Sin as *Adam* in his unfallen State was, and did not fall, as *Adam* did; or, whether Christ was born in our fallen State, and though prone to Sin, did not sin as all Mankind do, though not fully determined in *Rom. v. 18, 19*, yet ver. 12, and Context, compar'd with *Heb. ii. 17*, and chap. iv. 15, *1 Pet. ii. 19, 22, 24*, explains it to be in the latter Sense, and is most suitable to the Case; for if Christ had been born, died, and suffered for *Adam* alone, his being born as *Adam* was created, had been sufficient; but as he was born and suffer'd for all Men, he must be born as prone to Sin as other Men are, or, how was his Obedience to answer for all Mens Disobedience? *Rom. v. 19*. But it was for all, upon Terms conditionally to be accepted, and kept by us; and to those Terms the following Texts are to be apply'd, and comply'd with. Every Tongue must confess Christ with true Faith, which cannot be without true Repentance, *Rev. i. 7, Phil. ii. 11*, to God's Glory in their eternal Joy, in endless Life and Glory, *John vi. 28, 29, 40, Rom. viii. 18, 23, 32, 35, 39, chap. v. 3 to 21, chap. xi. 15 to 36, 2 Cor. v. 18, 19, John xi. 52, Eph. ii. 14 to 22, chap. i. 10, Col. i. 20*.

But

But though Christ's Human Nature effected all that was to be done for us, by his Sufferings, as Man, to avert our eternal Suffering; yet much more, and the chief Part is to be attributed to his Divine Nature, as before mentioned, to open to us the Kingdom of Heaven, and to receive us to endless Joy and Bliss in his eternal Glory.

Had Man's Body only been doom'd to suffer Death for Sin, and to some Sufferings in this Life, then Christ's Sufferings in his Life, and his Body's Death, would have been a sufficient Sacrifice for Man's Sin. But as Man's Soul was doomed to suffer too, therefore Christ's Soul was made an Offering and a Sacrifice for Sin; and as Souls do not go with their Bodies to the Grave, but separate from them, *Acts* ii. 31 must mean Hell, and not the Grave; and this is most agreeable to God's Attribute of Justice.

Christ finished all that he had to do in this Life, by his Death, *John* xvii. 4, chap. xix. 30; but all that had been in vain, if he had not risen from the Dead, *1 Cor.* xv. 14 to 23, and ascended to Heaven, *Acts* i. 3, 11, where he ever lives; and is our Mediator and Intercessor with God the ever blessed Trinity in Unity of the Deity, *1 Tim.* ii. 5, 6, *Heb.* vii. 25, chap. viii. 6, chap. xii. 24, *Rom.* viii. 34. Christ's Divine Nature did not suffer, but his whole Human Nature did, *Mark* viii. 12, *Luke* xxiii. 16, *John* xiii. 21. *Isaiab* liii. 10, and ver. 12 should be, *at his Death*, as the Term *himself* denotes to be his whole Man, as *Eph.* v. 2, *Heb.* vii. 27, chap. ix. 7, 17, and chap. x. 10, is so too, as *1 Cor.* xv. 44, 45, 46, shew,

God could indeed dispense with his Justice, with Respect to Offences against himself; and in his infinite Mercy could pardon them, without receiving Satisfaction for them; but as all Mankind are God's Creatures, his divine Justice requires, that all Men should make one another full Satisfaction for their Offences against each other; or in Consideration of their own Offences against God, as the Proprietor of all Men; and of their Inability to make Satisfaction to their offended Brethren, each should mutually forgive others, and accept of Christ's meritorious Sufferings, to make each other Satisfaction for what they are unable to do; and most humbly acknowledge their
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own Redemption purchas'd by him, and the eternal Glory which he has prepar'd in Heaven for us; if by our presumptuous Sins, and final Impenitence, we don't prevent the Blessing, and deserve Damnation to Hell Torments to the utmost, and to be punish'd eternally for want of Repentance, and our Non-Acceptance, of Christ's Merits, on the equitable, and gracious Terms, on which they are granted.

Life and Death was on conditional Terms, and so must Redemption be: And as to the Objection of God's ordaining or allowing the Just to suffer for the Unjust, *1 Pet. iii. 18, 19*, and that he who did no Sin should suffer for others Sins, as *Isaiah x. 12*, being not agreeable to God's Attribute of Justice? I answer, That it is agreeable to it, and to all his Attributes; and we see it in Abundance of Instances: And if God did not allow it in Men, he must abridge the Use of their Free-Will, and restrain them from Acts of social and mutual Goodness, Compassion, and Mercy. We have Abundance of Instances, both ancient and modern, of one Man's paying one or many poor Prisoners Debts, out of free good Will and tender Compassion; and of many that have willingly suffer'd, to save others from suffering, and that have offer'd to die for another Person: And do not Kings, Princes Lords, and Gentlemen, in Battle generously die in Defence of others Lives, and to protect their Country from Slavery, and to redeem Captives that are in Slavery? And private Soldiers do it too; for they attack the Enemy with a courageous Huzza, for the Honour of their Country, by which they mean, the Protection, not only of their Parents and Relations, but for Defence of the whole Country; and they ought not to be reproach'd, for receiving a small Subsistence, for the Labourer is worthy of his Hire, in all Cases, and not the least in this Case; and many, both Officers and Soldiers, venture their Lives in some Instances where it is morally impossible to escape Death; and others have run willingly to Death, when thereby they could save many; and shall Man be more righteous or benevolent than God? *Job iv. 17*: No; God has given us Precepts and Examples of his generous Compassion in forgiving. *Luke vii. 41, 42, 43*, is apply'd to God's forgiving Sinners, though Acts of Man's Free-Will,

in Imitation of Divine Goodness ; and *Phil.* xviii. 19, is so too ; in which *Paul's* Free-Will is moved by the Holy Spirit, as *Acts* iv. 31 to 37, chap. v. 3, 4, 9, *Phil.* ii. 13, 17 ; and so of Christ, *Luke* iv. 18, *Isaiah* lxi. 2, *Eph.* iv. 8, *Psalms* lxviii. 19 ; in all which, Man wills, and acts, and does, but God inspires him to do Acts of Benevolence, to whom be all the Glory : And paying Debts for the Insolvent, *Phil.* xviii. 19, is an Act of the Holy Spirit ; so is relieving the Needy, and ransoming Captives : And shall infinite Wisdom, Power, Goodness, and Mercy be restrained, and not do it for all Mankind ? And if one good Man shall dare to die for one good Man, or for many Men, probably not all of them good, shall not the righteous and innocent *Jesus* die for Sinners, *Rom.* v. 6, 7, 8, *Luke* iv. 18, *Eph.* iv. 8, and pay the Ransom for all Men, Life for Life, for them who could not be saved by any other Means ? *1 Tim.* ii. 6, *Mat.* xx. 28 ; and as sinful Man's Reward for such superior Acts of Goodness, as the saving others at the Hazard or Loss of their own Lives, shall through Christ's Merits, be great in Heaven ; surely so much more, nay, infinitely greater Reward, and highest Exaltation shall the sinless Man Christ *Jesus* have, who freely dy'd for all, and to save all that will accept the gracious Conditions, and Terms on which it is offer'd, *Phil.* ii. 8 to 11. And to Christ's inexpressible Sufferings, nothing can compare, because he bore the Curse due to all, and had the Weight of all our Sins upon him, which gave him an Agony not to be conceived, *Mat.* xxvii. 46, and doubtless the Torments of Hell, in an incomparable Excess.

Men die in Battle, or hazard their Lives to save their Fellow Countrymens Lives, some of which may be their particular Enemies ; but as they would not venture Life, to save them alone, Christ's Love and good Will, not only to hazard Life as Man, but freely to die, to save his greatest Enemies, *Mat.* v. 45, *Col.* i. 21, *2 Cor.* v. 15, is infinitely greater than that of the greatest King, who hazards his Life, or dies in Battle, to save his Subjects Lives, tho' some of which, perhaps, are not his Friends, as *John* xv. 13 speaks in general ; but so much his Enemies, that they would not have him to reign over them, *Luke* xix. 14. But his Will is not to die for them, but
for

for his Friends ; and Christ's Love in freely dying for his known irreclaimable Enemies, is infinitely greater.

But it is objected, What Need was there of this ? God forgives Offences against himself for his own Sake, *Isaiab* xliii. 25, and he could have made all Men to forgive one another. But this shews gross Ignorance in the Objector ; he might as well have said, that God could have prevented *Adam's* Fall, or have destroy'd him alone, or redeem'd him alone.

And so, indeed, he might, or not have given him the Use of Free-Will, but have made him an insensible Machine, but to no good End. But God only having Ideas of Things *in non esse*, and Creatures only of Things in Being, an infinite Variety must needs be ; and Opposites and Contraries will be of Course, and must be in Extreams : Pain as well as Pleasure, Dark as well as Light, Death as well as Life, and Evil as well as Good, *Rom.* vii. 13, and all this by God's Prevision, Prescience, Preordination, and Command ; in Order to bring out of it an exceeding greater Good, *Rom.* viii. 17 to 22, *2 Cor.* iv. 16, 17, 18 ; and which will fully appear to us at the End of this World, when we shall be compleated in our whole Man, by the Reunion of Soul and Body, spiritualiz'd and perfect in Knowledge.

And that all must then appear, at God's final Tribunal, will evidently appear, by considering, that if all the Judges in this World, were just and infallible, and knew the Secrets of Mens Hearts, and that every Transgression was discover'd and try'd, there might be but little or no Need of God's future Retribution ; but as Man is not infallible, nor can know Mens Consciences, nor all Crimes be discover'd and punish'd in this World ; an Appeal to God's future Judgment, is absolutely necessary, as his Justice requires ; which shews, that a future Judgment is no implicit Belief, but is agreeable to God's Attributes, and to Man's Right and Property, implanted by God in his Nature : And the same Reasons prove a final Judgment of the fallen Angels, in which the Honour of God, and his Justice between them and Mankind, is concern'd, *Isaiab* xliiii. 25 to 28, and Context ; and chap. iv. 1 to 5, implies Repentance, and if God pardons some Sins of willing Ignorance unrepented of, *Luke* xxiii. 3, 4, *Acts*

xii. 60, yet not all, such as *John* xvi. 2, 3, *1 Thes.* vi. 7, and ver. 4 to 9, *Rev.* vi. 10, chap. xix. 2, *Luke* xviii. 7, 8, so let none presume, or complain.

If it be objected, that God having commanded us to forgive one another, (if we do not do it it is our own Fault, and so) this leaves no Cause for future Judgment?

I answer, This is a thoughtless crude Notion; and if we consider it right, we shall find, that we are to imitate God in forgiving; and to forgive, as we may expect from his Justice in Mercy to be forgiven, *Exod.* xxxiii. 11, ch. xviii. 30, 31, 32, *2 Pet.* iii. 9, *Mat.* xviii. 22, *Luke* vi. 35, 36, 37, consider'd with chap. xvii. 3, 4, and *Mat.* xi. 21 to 24, and *Exod.* xxxiv. 6, 7, God would not have the Wicked die in their Sins: But Repentance is the Condition of Pardon, and on that Condition we are to forgive Offences, or so to forgive, as to pray for their Repentance and Pardon, &c. But great Offenders are not to pass unrebuk'd, nor the highly guilty, if impenitent, go unpunished, as the above Texts shew. If the Evil done, concerns none but ourselves alone, and that our future Safety is not endanger'd by it, we may forgive great Crimes; but not if the Publick is endanger'd, and may suffer by them; but otherwise we are to forgive, or to use Mercy in punishing, *Exod.* xxxiv. 6, 7, *Isaiah* xliii. 25. God's forgiving, for his own Sake, the most enormous Offences, is against himself only, and where no Repentance can be sufficient to plead Pardon; but yet he expects and accepts of Repentance, through Christ's Merits, as ver. 25 to 28, chap. xlv. 1 to 5; and he does not pardon wilful, heinous, obstinate, incorrigible Offenders upon their too late Repentance, *Mat.* xii. 31, 32; nor if it affects his rational Creatures, for then he requires Satisfaction, or Reparation. Unavoidable Ignorance, God does not lay to Mens Charge: But Ignorance through sensual Neglect is a very great Sin, as it leads to Error, and prevents knowing the Truth; and by which the most inhuman Crimes are committed, and of which they do not repent, as believing they do God good Service; even in murdering innocent Men, *John* xvi. 29, *Luke* xxiii. 34, *Acts* vii. 60, *1 Thes.* vi. 7, 8, and ver. 4 to 9, *Rev.* vi. 10, chap. xix. 2, and *Luke* xviii. 7, 8. We are to shew

shew Mercy to Enemies, and to feed, cloath, and help them in Danger, when not to endanger ourselves, or others, *Mat. v. 44, 45*, *Rom. xii. 20*; and to reclaim Enemies by good Offices, is good Policy, but not to trust them too far, lest they should be insincere, *Mat. x. 16*, chap. xxiv. 43, and lest the Robber you save should murder you, or endanger the publick Safety; for in that you sin against yourself, or Society. But there are many Crimes, which without Miracles cannot be discover'd, and so not pardon'd or punish'd in this Life; nor will the Good or Penitent, and the wicked Impenitents meet, till God's final Tribunal at the End of this World, *Luke xvi. 26*, *Mat. xxiv. 30 to 36*, when all Men will be brought Face to Face, and implead each other, as God in Wisdom has ordained, to be done at once in the End of the World, that all may see his Justice together.

Having mention'd *Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7*, I cannot but take Notice of a late boasting Enquiry into the Scheme and Conduct of God's Providence, &c. which instead of vindicating, greatly depreciates, and falsely accuses it.

I shall only mention here the Author's gross Error in misrepresenting the second Command, *Exod. xx. 5, 6*. He says, This is the only Commandment that God punishes to the fourth Generation; and the Reason is, because it is the Sin of Idolatry. This is his Sence of it; and he pretends to justify God's punishing the Fourth Generation, for the great, great Grandfather's Crime of Idolatry, without their being guilty of it; but does not vindicate it.

But Covetousness, or the Love of any Thing more than God, is worse Idolatry in Christians, than Image Worship is in Heathens; and it is complicated with the Breach of all God's Commands, *Col. iii. 5*, and ver. 1 to 8; so that offending in one Point, is being guilty of breaking the whole Law, *James ii. ver. 10*. Covetousness, which is idolizing the Things created, and loving them more than the Creator, is the Cause of Theft, Murder, Adultery, Perjury, Prophaneness, Sabbath-breaking, and Ungratefulness to Parents, as well as literal Idolatry, and so is a Breach of the whole Law.

But

But the true Sence of the Second Commandment is this, *Exod. xx. 5, 6*, If Sons or Grandsons approve of, and adhere to, or commit their Forefathers Crimes, in Disobedience of any of God's Commands; or will not make Restitution for what they know their Fathers have unjustly gotten by Fraud or Violence, they are then guilty of their Fathers Sins, and Partakers of their Fathers Iniquity, as being Partakers of their ill gotten Goods; for Iniquity is a Plural, and relates to all God's Laws, as the Word Commandments, ver. 6, shews, and as *Deut. iv. 1, 2*, and chap. v. 1, explains; and their Punishment is for continuing in their Fathers Crimes, and committing all or any Sort of Sins, as is imply'd, by them that hate God, ver. 3, and consequently live in all Sorts of Sin. But ver. 6, God shews Mercy to them (though Sons of evil Men) that love him, and keep his Commandments, and do not commit, nor approve, nor are Partakers of their Fathers Crimes. 'The Sence is plain, and needs not, tho' it is more fully explained by *Jer. xxxii. 18, 19*, and *Ezek. xviii.* where it is expressly said, 'The Sons shall not suffer for their Fathers Sins; excepting what is consequential and unavoidable, by Fathers spending their Estates, and leaving Children poor, or entailing evil Diseases upon them. But Sons left poor; may, by honest Industry, grow rich, or be happy, if content in mean Circumstances. But consequential Evils, and their own Punishment, ought to deter Parents from entailing Evils on their Children.

As experimental Knowledge in Creatures is more perfect than intuitive Knowledge, and that therefore temporal Afflictions work for us a greater Happiness in eternal Life and Glory; God might, agreeable to his Wisdom and Goodness, have created *Adam*, in a State liable to Pain and Death; or if he had not sinn'd, he might have made him suffer Pain and Death, in Order to a greater Knowledge and Perfection, and to higher Degrees of Happiness; (as well as to ordain, that Christ, who sinned not, should suffer for Sinners): But that could not have fully answer'd the End of all, in full Perfection; for Generation is as necessary a Part of infinite Variety as Creation is: and God made a Covenant with *Adam*, which must needs affect all his Posterity, of natural Consequence (as

(as he made a Covenant with the Angels, each for themselves, as being created and not generated.)

And as *Adam's* Posterity were not, nor could be guilty of his original Transgression against God's Commands, as an Effect can't be a Cause ; but are of natural Course subject to the Imperfections, which his Fall caus'd in himself ; an Irrectitude of Will, and Proneness to do Evil ; and being liable to suffer for it : God hath shew'd us, in the Man Christ *Jesus*, how possible and easy it had been for *Adam* to have preserved his Innocence ; for though in Christ the Divine and Human Nature were united, yet not inseparably till his Ascension to Heaven ; nor so as not to leave the Human Nature free to act as Man, and liable (and propence too) to sin, though he sinned not ; for though the Divine Nature operated in him occasionally and constantly, so far as to prove his Acts of Divine Power, and did not depart from, but accompany the Human Nature as united with it ; yet he was left as Man to be tempted, suffer, and dye, *Mat. iv. 1 to 11, chap. xxxvii. 46.* And as all have sinned, and do sin, and can make no compleat Satisfaction to God, nor many of them to Man, for their Offences ; therefore Christ, who sinned not, must needs suffer to satisfy Divine and Human Justice, and pay the Debt which we could not pay to God or Man : For though God can freely and fully pardon all, with Respect to himself ; and as all Creatures are his Property ; yet as he has given them natural Properties, and justly acquir'd Properties too ; he will therefore do all of them Justice, by rewarding, recompensing, and punishing. Christ, indeed, paid the Recompence, but it was conditionally, and on those Conditions only (and not otherways) Man will have the Benefit of Christ's paying the Recompence : And, alas ! too many Men, neither accept of, nor perform those Conditions : And Christ's Sufferings, and nothing else, could take off all Discontent from Man, on Account of his being born in a State of Propensity to do, and consequently to suffer Evil, and give us entire Satisfaction in that Point : and as we are born liable to Pain and Death, before we are capable of sinning, so Christ was born liable to Pain and Death, and in all Things like us, *Heb. iv. 15,* though he lived without Sin ; and therefore as Christ lived without Sin, and suffer'd for all, and more than all,

chap.

chap. ii. 9 to 18, *Phil.* ii. 5 to 11. God exalted his Human Nature above all Creatures.

But after all, not only God's free Pardon would not have had full Effect, but had not Christ united the Divine and Human Nature in his Person, and so fill'd up the Chasm between God and Creature, as before asserted, no rational Creature could have been perfectly satisfy'd in his Being, nor ultimately happy.

It is a Mystery which Angels desire to look into, as well as Men, *1 Pet.* i. 12, and from ver. 3 to 12, and is the Completion of rational Creatures Happiness; in which the Angels as well as Men rejoice with the most rapturous Joy, *Luke* ii. 13, 14, 15. And thus as God's Goodness, and good Will to all his Creatures, induces him to give his rational Creatures entire Satisfaction, in the wise and good Designs of his Providence, and to prevent their Discontent, thro' wrong Notions of it; he shews us by the Sufferings of him who sinned not, that his making us Sinners liable to Pain and Death, may turn to; and end in a greater and future Good, if we make a right Use of it; and if so, it will be really our more consummate and eternal Happiness; which is sufficient, and the only Way to give us Comfort, and a well grounded Hope under all transitory Sufferings and Afflictions: and Man's State of Trial in this Life is so short, with Respect to Eternity, that it is as nothing to it, and can make no Comparison with it; and the Fault is ours if we don't enjoy a happy Eternity, free from the Pains of Hell: and the poorest Man has no Reason to complain, as he is vastly superior to Brute Animals, and may be as happy, or happier in Eternity, than the greatest Monarch; and he ought to thank God, that he is not such a Creature as he most detesteth, loathes, and abhors.

And Christ suffering for our Example, ought to make us content in our Condition of Life, and humble, and patient, in Hope of a happy State in Eternal Life. And Christ's Sufferings and Merits was sufficiently reveal'd, and well known from the Beginning of the World, *Gen.* iii. 15, though not so perfectly known, as when they were fulfill'd; but the particular Description of his Merits and Sufferings, by succeeding Prophets, were not new Revelations, but Repetitions of what God had reveal'd from
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the Beginning, *Isaiah* xl. 21, chap. xli. 26, chap. xlv. 10, chap. xlviii. 3, 5, 16, but neglected to be remember'd by Men, who did not like to retain even the Knowledge of the True God, *Rom.* i. 28.

As for such as, by their Forefathers Neglect to teach their Children, are destitute of the Knowledge of the Means of Salvation and Redemption, God requires of them but to act according to what they do know, or may know, if they may be taught and don't refuse to learn.

And as God's wise and good Dispensations are very different, with Respect to the Knowing and the Ignorant, requiring more or less of them, as they do, or may know his Will, so the greater will be their Joy, as well as Surprise, who never heard of their Saviour in this Life, if they have liv'd according to God's Laws impress'd in Man's Nature, and to the Remains of God's original Laws revealed to *Adam*, which are not totally obliterated in the most ignorant Parts of the Earth : With what joyful Surprise will they be fill'd, when every Eye shall see the Saviour of the World, and every Tongue confess Christ to be their Lord, to the Glory of God the Father ? *Rev.* i. 7, *Phil.* ii. 10, 11, *1 Cor.* xv. 24 to 28. If it be objected that this is still implicit Faith, I answer, we have better Evidence for it, than for any Thing of an inferior Nature that depends on frail Reason only ; for God's Being and Attributes, are fully evident in, and by his Works ; and it is contrary to his Wisdom, to imagine, that he made Man capable of knowing him, and yet only to live in this short and uncertain Life, which is but a School, to fit us for greater Perfection, and consummate Happiness : And the most Ignorant have some Knowledge of God ; and as a necessary Part of infinite Variety, Infants, and Idiots, &c. as being made of the same Substance, and descending by Generation from the same Original Parents, created in God's Image, it is contrary to God's Attributes that they shall perish, and not have the bless'd Surprise of seeing God, and being happy in the Knowledge of him in a future State of Life.

In this Life we can know nothing but in Part : We can't visibly see our own Souls, but we perceive, and are sure, by the Operations and Effects, that we have an intellectual rational Mind, to direct every Thought, and

an Animal Spirit to move the Body in every Act, which otherwise would be as motionless as a dead Corpse, and as unintelligent, till it is reviv'd, and spiritualiz'd, and re-united with the Soul; and will be then as intelligent as the Soul, both being then entirely spiritual.

And if the Mind was not endu'd with a spiritual Sight, invisible and incomprehensible to our Sense, but evidently, and sufficiently demonstrable to our Understanding; we should be no more sensible of Light, than a House is of the Light that shines through the Windows: And by secret Means, all the Senses convey Perceptions to the Soul. Brute Animals have the same Conveyance to their instinctive animal Perception, but they have not rational Faculties to ruminate, and philosophize upon Things, as Man can do, to his Consolation and Joy in Divine Contemplation, and to prevent many Misfortunes.

And though we have ocular Demonstration that the ponderous Orbs are suspended in the Air, and have each a threefold Motion, yet we can only say, it is done by the Wisdom and Power of God, but can't tell how it is done: No, nor how the least Thing in Nature is what it is; and yet it is reasonable, and no implicit Faith, to believe it. And the Union of Man's Spirit, Soul, and Body, is an Emblem of the Union of Christ's Divine and Human Nature, as well as of the Trinity in Unity, as before demonstrated: And as God only has, or can have essential innate Ideas; and Creatures must know Things by Comparison, were not the Chasm between God and Creature filled up, as no Comparison can be between infinite and finite, no rational Creature could have entire Satisfaction in his State of Being: and it seems that the fallen Angels, not being content, as not fully knowing; though sufficiently knowing how that Chasm could be filled up, and the Creature be united to the Creator, was the Cause of their aspiring Ambition, which grew to Rebellion against God; but which as their fallen State is one necessary Part of infinite Variety; not forc'd upon them, but an Act of their Free-Will, it will help to illustrate the Whole of God's Providence; and in and to the Whole, will turn to a greater good in the final End, though to their own eternal Degradation: And when our Knowledge is perfect, both we and all the Angels, all rational Creatures that are capable

pable of knowing their God, will, in extatick Joy, exult, and say, Oh! the Depth of the infinite Wisdom, Goodness, and Power of God! *Rom. xi. 26 to 36.*

And we find that the blessed Saints are to be, in a comparative Sense, united to Christ, though not so as his Human Nature is united to the Divine Nature, *John xvii. 21, 22, 23*, the Difference is shewn, ver. 24, the Spirit of Man returns to God, and not to nothing, when his Body returns to Dust, *Eccles. xii. 7*, not to unite with the Divine Essence; nor to be disembod'ed, but individually to be existent in the Divine Effluvia of that Essence, from whence it was externally effluated, or out-breathed from the Divine immutable Essence, and so not to be absorbed, dispoliated, or disindividuated; but to be entire in the Divine Effluvia, and to be reunited with its Body, when rais'd from the Grave and refin'd to Spirit, as being Spirit condens'd to Element.

By this Means, God will bring all Things to full and final Perfection, as the Design and End of infinite Wisdom and Goodness, effected by his infinite Power. And thus by considering the infinite, gradual, concatenate Variety, all gradually proceeding from God, and link'd together, and the Chasm that must needs be between God and Creature, to be filled up and united, to make all perfect, *John xvii. 21, 22, 23*, *Eph. i. 10*, the uniting the Divine and Human Nature appears to be agreeable to natural Philosophy, as well as to the Scriptures, understood by the Test of God's Attributes, and to be the only Way that it could possibly be done; and leaves no Room for implicit or irrational Belief, as being rational or agreeable to Reason Philosophical; and in nothing contrary to right Reason apply'd to God's Attributes.

And indeed all God's Works are Evidences of his Being, and of his being a Trinity in Unity: And as not any Thing is self-made, nor proceeded from nothing, but from an intelligent, all-sufficient Being, who sustains, preserves, fixes, changes, rechanges, destroys, and renovates; debases, refines, and exalts Things, as he in Wisdom and Goodness pleases to effect, by his Power; so as all Things proceed from him, not of his immutable Essence, but from the spirated Effluvia of his Essence; and as he contains all Things, and is in all Things, and

that all Things are in him ; and yet as there must needs be a vast chasmical Difference between God and Creature, and which the earnest Desire that Creatures have to be like God, in Perfection and Happiness, cannot be any other Way satisfied ; and consequently they could not be consummately happy, without being united to God, and made Partakers of the Divine Nature : And as the Creature, being finite, could not be united with an infinite immense Being, without a Medium ; and that God is a Center to all, as well as the boundless Circumference of all ; so Christ is that Center, by which the Body (the Church) is united to its Head in Christ's Divine Nature, who is the Head of the Church ; and God, the ever blessed Trinity in Unity of the Deity, is the Head of all, and God over all, blessed for ever, *Amen.* 2 *Pet.* i. ver. 2 to 9, *Eph.* iv. 3 to 15, chap. i. 10, 22, 23, chap. ii. 16 to 22, *Col.* i. 18 to 24. chap. ii. 9, 1 *Cor.* xi. 2, chap. xv. 28.

N. B. I have heard some Clergymen say, That God's Attributes could not be a Rule, by which to understand the Scriptures, or to distinguish between Truth and Errors, or false Tenets in Religion ; because, there were many Things in Religion, that had no Relation to God's Attributes ; nay, that God's Attributes had nothing to do with them ; nor those Things any Thing to do with God's Attributes. To which I have answer'd, and can prove ; that many Things have been, and still are, taught for Religion, that are no Part of real and true Religion ; and which I shall prove in a particular Manner in the second Part of this Essay ; and that whatever is true Religion is founded upon God's Attributes, and what is contrary to them, cannot be true Religion.

As to Things indifferent, they may be different in several Countries ; and if for Order and Decency only (and are not meer superstitious Whimsies or Idolatries, which must needs be contrary to God's Attributes) they may, and ought to be agreed to, for Peace and Unity Sake ; and to disagree to them can be nothing better than self-conceited Pride, and wilful Obstinacy ; and hence some Men will like nothing but what is of their own devising
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and doing ; or what Prejudice of Education makes them implicitly and obstinately adhere to, without any Examination ; or suffering any Reasons to be offer'd to refute and explode their vain false Notions or Opinions.

And except Things indifferent (to which none should be violently attached, nor obstinately refuse) there is nothing in real and true Religion but what is either expressly agreeable to God's Attributes, or in nothing contrary to them ; and nothing of the most indifferent Sort is to be admitted or allow'd, or comply'd with, if it appears in any Thing to be contrary to God's Attributes ; or not in some Respect agreeable to them all, and not to Power alone contrary to Wisdom, as is but too much the present Case in Religion.

The Sum of the whole Essay.

I Hope I have demonstrated to common Understanding, and to the Approbation and Satisfaction of all who would be religious in Deed and in Truth ; That God requires nothing arbitrarily of us to believe for Articles of Faith ; nor leaves us in any Point of Faith, to meer implicit Belief.

Faith is a real spiritual Substance, and not a meer empty Shadow, Phantom, or Non-Entity ; but has the most infallible Evidence of what it has just Reason to hope for, *Heb. xi. 1*, which I shall thus sum up.

If some Being had not ever been, no Being could ever have been in Being. We see nothing that could make or does sustain itself ; and this recurs to one self-existent and all-sufficient Being, and Cause of all created Beings, by whom All is preserv'd and govern'd. If there was not an eternal Time, or Duration, there could be no Periods of Time, or Duration, (*Rev. x. 6*, relates to our World and this Life only). If there was not immense or boundless Place, there could be no definite Place. The Heaven of Heavens, Immensity, is the Place of God, which
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is a Substantive, *1 Kings* viii. 27, *Psalms* xxxiii. 13, 14; and Space is an Accedent, or Adjective, *Gen.* xxxii. 16, *1 Sam.* xxvi. 13, and is the most philosophical Distinction. If God were not immutable, he might cease to be God, and consequently to preserve created Things in Being. If all was not govern'd by One, as Supreme, no Order could be preserv'd, but all would fall into Confusion. All Things demonstrate God's Attributes of infinite Wisdom and Power; and Wisdom is Goodness, as now does, and more fully will appear in all, and extend to all in the final End; yet so as to reward, and punish with Justice, but with Mercy shown to the Penitent through Faith in Christ's Merits. God has impress'd a Triad, or Ternary on all Things as the Marks of a Trinity in Unity of the Deity.

The gradual concatenate Chain of all created Things, shews, that the Chasm between God and Creature must be filled up, to give rational Creatures entire Satisfaction, and to compleat their ultimate Happiness.

This can't be done but by uniting the uncreated and created Natures, and is done in the Person of Christ; and thus created Things specifiated from the Divine Effluvia, as externally spirated from the Divine immutable Essence, will be united to it, *John* xvii. 21, 22, 23, not absorb'd in it, but remain in distinct specifiated Individuals, as the Divine and Human Nature are united; but remain distinct in Christ our Lord; and of which, Man's Soul and Body is an Emblem; and will have a real Distinction, when the elemental Body is refin'd to a spiritual Substance, and become with the Soul, one spiritual Body. And the continual natural Condensation and Rarification of Things, show and prove, and even artificial Condensation and Rarifications corroborate the natural Evidence, that Element is Spirit condensed, and rarifies to Spirit; and is an incontestible Evidence, that Man's elemental Body will be reviv'd and spiritualiz'd: and were our Bodies Dust, scatter'd all over the World; or our Flesh devour'd by rapacious Creatures, God, who caus'd the Atoms of the Chaos to connect in one Orb (and a thick gross Fog is an Emblem of its Condensation to Atoms) he can separate the Dust of each individual Body, and rarify it to Spirit, and unite it with its Soul, as well as form it of Dust, *Gen.* ii.

7, *Eccles.* xii. 7. And all Things in Nature do so highly magnify God's infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, as shew that his Attributes are the infallible and only Test of all religious Truth, as recorded in the Holy Scriptures; which God's Attributes prove to be reveal'd to Man, by his Holy Spirit.

I shall leave practical Religion, and the Sacraments, and other Ordinances and Institutions; and some Errors which are too generally receiv'd and implicitly believ'd; to a second Part; and sum up this Part, in the following Articles of Faith.

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Summary of True Faith.

I Believe the certain and real Being of one Eternal, *Self-existent, Self-subsistent, Self-sufficient, and All-sufficient Essence, which is a spiritual Body, of most solid Substance (*1 Cor.* xv. 40, 44, *Col.* ii. 9, of uncreated Nature; entirely independent, and a most Perfect Being; Immense, Infinite, and Indefinite; Indivisible, Impromiscuous,

* A necessary Explanation to the unlearned, of the above Terms. Eternal, is without Beginning, Interval, or End. Self-existent, of himself alone, and not of nothing, or of, or from any other Being. Essence, is the entire Being of a spiritual Nature. Spiritual Substance is its Manner of Being, as entirely spiritual. Immense, boundless and not to be measur'd. Infinite, not to be defined. Indivisible, undividable and inseparable. Impromiscuous,

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cuous, or Incommiffible ; moſt Holy, Pure, and Incontaminate ; Innocuous, Immarceſſible, Immutable, Indiffoluble, and Immortal ; Impervious and Impenetrable ; Penetrating and Pervading all, and each Thing ; Comprehending all, and Centring in every Thing ; not to be Comprized, Interfer'd with, or Pervaded by any Thing, but muſt needs be Incomprehenſible to finite Creatures, though ſufficiently known to rational Beings, eſpecially in their final Perfection ; the Primordial Cause of all Being, and ſo is the Father of all Being ; and moſt properly ſtyled, *God the Father*.

Who being eternally proliſtick, active, and productive ; he did, of his own eternal, immense, immortal, immutable, and indiviſible Eſſence ; eternally generate, by internal Emanation, his principal Production ; who is therefore moſt properly ſtyled, *his only generated Son* (as not created) who is holy, immutable, indiviſible, immortal, perfect, and eternal, and our Lord.

And of the ſame eternal, immense, immortal, immutable, and indiviſible Eſſence ; the eternal, uncreated, immense, immutable, indiviſible, perfect, and immortal *Holy Spirit*, is the eternal Production of God the Father, and the Son, by like internal Emanation.

And by God the Father's eternal and internal Emanation and Communication of his Eſſence ; and his holy communicable Attributes to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ; they are, by, in, and with him, the ever bleſſed, happy, eternal, coeval, uncreated, undivided, holy and glorious Trinity of Perſonalities, in the inſeparable Unity of Eſ-

or Incommiſſible, unmix'd. Incontaminate, not pollutable or deſilable. Innocuous, neither doing nor ſuffering Hurt. Immarceſſible, uncorruptible. Immutable, unchangable. Indiffoluble, undiffolvable. Immortal, never dying. Impervious, not to be paſſed through. Impenetrable, not to be pierced or pried into. Pervading, is being in and thro' all Things ; and all Things are in God ; but nothing can pervade or paſs through him ; for he incomprehenſibly comprehends all Things, and can't be comprized by any Thing ; nor can be ſtopt, lett, hinder'd, moleſted, or prevented, or have any Interference, by or from any Thing.

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sence of the One God, and only true and ever living Deity ;

Who are, and is, the infinitely wise, infinitely good, and omnipotent God and Father of all created Beings and Things, as being the primordial, mediate, immediate, and joint prolifick Efficient, and productive Cause of all Creation : The Creator, Preserver, and Sustainer of all : Ever omnipresent, * omnipercipient, omniscient, omniaudient ; and the prescient, ordinant, and preordinant Director ; and the universal sole sovereign Lord and supream Governor of all : *viz.* of the Heaven of Heavens, which is Immensity, eternally : and of all temporary and finite Heavens or Spheres, and all Orbs in them. And of our terraqueous Orb and Habitation ; and of all the infinite gradual Variety of the whole Creation, spiritual and visible to spiritual Creatures, though now invisible to us ; and of elemental Natures visible to our present Sight ; of all Things in our World, and in the boundless Immensity, the universal World, containing all created Things.

But tho' the Trinity in Unity, are of the same indivisible and immutable Essence, and the One only True God ; some special Attributes are necessarily peculiar to each Person in the Trinity, distinct and relative : In which a Personal Supereminence appears in God the Father, who only being Self-existent, and primordially productive, is implicateally call'd God. And as the Son and the Holy Spirit are of his indivisible and immutable Essence and Power communicated ; so they are imply'd to be, and really are, by, in, and with the Father, God over all, blessed for ever.

Although God is, and needs must be, incomprehensible, in his eternal and immense Being, and his infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, &c. yet he is, and will be sufficiently, delightfully, and satisfactorily known to all rational Creatures : And so now is, and, in due Time, will be sufficiently understood by us ; and so will be all his wondrous, beauteous, and glorious Works, and his

* The Terms from this Mark * mean all-seeing, foreseeing, all-knowing, foreknowing, all hearing, and understanding, ordaining, and preordaining all Things.

good Providence ; and in the Knowledge and Enjoyment of both, our ultimate Happiness will be finally compleat.

I believe, that God created Angels, and their Habitations, before he created Man, and both of them rational Creatures, capable of knowing him, and being happy in the Knowledge of him : And for their Good he necessarily, and graciously endu'd them with the Power and noble Faculty of Free-Will in general, but subject to his all-wise and beneficent Controle ; which he exercises, in some particular Instances, always for their present, or future Good. And though God is now invisible to our elemental Sight, I believe he is visible to the holy spiritual Angels, and to glory'd Saints, who are spiritual in Heaven, and will be visible to us, in the Life to come.

And I believe, that God revealed and made himself known to our Primogenitors and common Parents, *Adam* and *Eve*, at their Creation, by a glorious Appearance in a Form and Figure visible and suitable to Man's Nature and Perception ; and taught them the Art and Use of Speech for their social Conversation ; and instructed them in all Things necessary for them to know, believe, forbear, and do, for their Sustaining, Safety, and Happiness ; and gave them Laws, for their Good only, and therefore kindly commanded their Obedience of them, and most justly made their Disobedience penal.

I believe God's predestinate Decrees in Creation are absolute, as to the Creatures Natures, in his Designation which shall be Angels, Men, or inferior Creatures.

But with Respect to the Degrees of Free-Will, which he necessarily gives them, suitable to their several Natures ; and to the Laws which he gives to his rational Creatures for their good, his preordinate Decrees are conditional, and proportioned to their good or ill Use of their Free-Will, in obeying or disobeying his Commands, and to be rewarded or punished according to their Works. In which God's Fore-Knowledge lays no Necessity on their Will or Acts ; but he super-adds his free Grace, to enable them to do well, if they will make a right Use of it : And in whatever he thinks fit to controle their Will, it is for their present or future good. He lays no unavoidable Necessity upon them, nor hardens any Men's Hearts, but for their Punishment, after they have obstinately hardened

ened them in Wickedness, by their continual Disobedience of his good Laws.

And I believe, that some of the Angels, by the ill Use of their Free-Will, and by their Disobedience of God's Commands and Laws, though made for their Good (as he made all Things good, and to tend to, and end in good) they fell from their first Dignity and Happiness, and became Devils, and were, by God's Justice, condemn'd to Torments in themselves and their Consciences ; and from which they can in no Place be free, whether in Hell, or the Air, or the Earth and its Atmosphere ; to which they are alternately confin'd, till their final Condemnation to the second Death. But every Place is a Sort of Hell where Torments unavoidable are inflicted as Punishments, and the Time of Suffering is indeterminate to the Sufferers.

But as to Opinion, some Men think, that *Job* i. 6, *Mat.* viii. 29, 31, 32, *John* xiv. 30, *Eph.* ii. 2, *Jude* 6, *Rev.* xx. 7, and ver. 1 to 10, and *Mat.* iv. 1 to 11, seems to mean some Intervals, Respites, and Abbreviations of Torment : But some short Glimpses of God's Glory, and of the Felicity of other Creatures, may increase their Woes, by sometimes having fresh Prospects of what they have lost and never can regain ; and Returns of long Pain after short Intervals, are oft more accute and intense, of which to determine absolutely, is no necessary Article of Faith.

I believe, that the chief, and all the fallen Angels, by their Fall, grew evil and malicious (and it not answering the End of God's good Providence to destroy them) and they necessarily retaining the Use of their Free-Will, and envying Man's Happiness, the chief Devil, by false Pretences and Lies, deceived, tempted, deluded, and seduced *Eve*, and by her *Adam*, to the ill Use of their Free-Will, and to the Disobedience of God's Commands and Laws, made for their good ; by which they also fell from their first happy State of Being ; and from being good became prone to do Evil, and liable, as their just Punishment, to suffer Evil, Pain, and Death of their Bodies ; and their Souls liable to the Stings of Conscience, and the Pains of Hell, with the Devils, for believing them rather than God's Truth. And as all Mankind descend from them by successive Generation (though

not guilty of their Sin, as being the Effect produced, and not the Cause) all are, of natural Consequence, involved in their lapsed State and Condition, prone to do Evil, and liable to suffer Evil and Punishment, in Estate, Mind, Body, and Conscience, Death, and Hell, for our own Sins and Impenitence only ; or for causing or being Partakers of other Mens Sins : but by a true Repentance, and true Faith in Christ's Merits, we may regain the Favour of God, and escape his eternal Judgment ; as we hope and may believe our first Parents did, by accepting God's Promises on his gracious Terms, *Gen.* iii. 15, which doubtless was at large and in a very particular Manner explained to *Adam* and *Eve* ; to relate to Man's Redemption to Life Eternal : and not reveal'd to *Joh.* ch. xix. 25, 26, 27, but spoke as an Act of his Faith in God's Promise to *Adam*, successively taught in succeeding Generations, even to Heathens, *Numb.* xxiv. 2, 16 to 19, and known to all true Believers, who retain'd the Knowledge of God, and true Religion, and were not grown Infidels, as *Rom.* i. 28.

And I believe it was preordained by God (who made all Things very good) to bring a greater Good out of Evil ; but so as not to suffer the guilty Impenitent to escape due Punishment : And that God's Eternal Son (to restore the fallen Creation, in some Sort and Degree ; and in some Degree to exalt some of the fallen Part of Creation) took upon him the Office of Angels, and the Nature of Man ; and to compleat the whole Work of God, mysteriously united the Divine and Human Nature in his Person ; and so made God manifest in Man (in the Flesh and Spirit, Soul and Body) but without any Change in the Divine or Human Nature ; so that though a real Union was made, the Human Nature only was born, suffer'd, and died ; being conceived of God the Father, through the Eternal Son, and by the Holy Spirit ; and in due Time, as Man (and in that distinct Nature) was born of a pure Virgin (in a higher Sense than as *Adam* was made without a Woman, and *Eve* of him) ; and to distinguish the Divine and Human Nature, he was called *Emanuel*, and *Jesus* Christ our most Blessed Lord, Saviour, and Redeemer : who though he shewed his Divine Power in many miraculous Acts and Effects, yet he lived on Earth, in his Human Nature, a poor, despised, and sorrowful Life,

Life, in Want and Distress, in our present State of Tryal ; bearing our Infirmities, and being liable to Temptations, which he overcame without Sin (though left free as Man, to act ; and no otherways supported in his human Acts, by Divine Power, than we are by God's Grace, through the Holy Spirit) : And he liv'd as our Excellent Example, in Holiness, Righteousness, and every Virtue, Meekness, Patience, Humility, Fortitude, and Contentment ; under all Afflictions and Sufferings ; and under the Weight of all our Sins, he felt an Agony of Mind, inconceivable to us ; and his human Body died on the Cross a painful and ignominious Death for our Iniquities ; and to save us from Damnation ; and was buried in the Grave in the Earth ; and his Human Soul descended to Hell, to be an Offering, and a Sacrifice for Man's Transgressions. And being aided and supported, by his Divine Power, to begin his Conquest over Hell, and Death, and of both infernal and incarnate Devils ; which he will accomplish in God's due Time ; and in some Sort effect a Restoration of all Things. From Hell he return'd to Earth, on the third Day after his human Body's Death, and then revived it from Death, and raised it from the Grave, and reunited it with his human Soul ; and then made the Union of his Soul and Body, and of his Divine and Human Nature inseparable. And from Earth he ascended to Heaven, where his Divine Nature is reinstated and enthron'd high in the Glory of God the Father, with the Holy Spirit ; and his Human Nature is exalted above all Creatures : By all which he has compleated the Salvation and Redemption of Mankind ; which will be clearly reveal'd to, and known in due Time by the Blessed, as he receives them to Glory in Heaven ; so that by Faith and true Repentance of our Faults, we may, through Christ's Merits, obtain the Remission of our Sins ; and Life Eternal, in consummate Happiness. And he is our blessed Mediator ; and the Holy Spirit with him, is our gracious Intercessor in Heaven ; in their distinct Personalities, apply'd to God essentially, as the Trinity in Unity of the Deity ; and the Holy Spirit is our Guide, Sanctifier, and Comforter on Earth, in our present State of Tribulation and Probation.

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I believe, that God holds three Courts of Judicature with Respect to Man : The first a continual Court of Conscience seated in every Man's Soul in this Life ; and from which none can escape ; and by which every Man ought to judge himself, to prevent his future Eternal Condemnation.

And at the second continual *audit* ; every Man's intellectual, spiritual, and immortal Soul, at his mortal Body's Death ; does instantly appear before God's awful visible Majesty ; to answer for his Acts and Deeds in this Life done ; with Respect to his Offences against God : And if he was good, and penitent for his Sins, he will, through Christ's Merits, be readily receiv'd to Heaven and Happiness ; or, if wicked, and impenitent, will be doom'd to Hell Torments for his Disobedience of God's Commands : For though Christ's Merits are sufficient for Man's Redemption, yet as God's Covenant with Man was conditional ; so are the Terms of his Redemption conditional, to Faith, and Repentance, and future Obedience, as the only Proof of true Faith.

And God in Christ his Eternal Son will hold his Third and general Tribunal at the End of this present World ; when all Mens dead Bodies will, by God's Power, be revived and raised from the Grave ; and be spiritualized and reunited with their Souls ; and the Living be instantly changed, to spiritual Bodies : and all appear together to confront and accuse their spiritual Enemies the fallen Angels ; who will then have their final Condemnation ; and the blessed Saints, under Christ the Supream Judge, will, as an inferior Court of Judicature, in some Cases, judge the fallen Angels ; and the wicked Worshipers of the Devil, ironically called the God of this World, and its fading Vanities, 2 Cor. iv. 4, 1 Cor. ii. 3, Rev. xx. 4, chap. xvii. 16, and all Mankind are then as well as at their Bodies Death to be try'd, either by the Evidence of their Light of Nature ; or the Remains of God's original Law revealed to *Adam*, and known to them ; or by God's Law repromulg'd to, and by *Moses* ; or by the Gospel of *Jesus* Christ our Lord ; according to each Man's possible knowledge ; and no Man to be condemn'd for Incapacity, or unavoidable Ignorance. And all must then acknowledge all good Offices done by, and social Benefits re-

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ceived from Mankind ; and implead each other for their interpass'd Trespases against one another in this Life ; and then receive their final Sentence, of Come ye blessed to Eternal Life in perfect Bliss celestial ; or, Go ye cursed into the second Death of Soul and Body in Hell, to be tormented as your Sins deserve. When the Blessed will be eternally fix'd in their consummate State of Joy and Bliss, without Interruption, or Intermision, or End. And the cursed and damned, when released from their long and terrible Torments ; will be fixed in a low and contemptible State, without End ; expelled from the beatifick Vision of God's Glory ; and excluded from the happy State of the Blessed ; which will be a very great and an eternal Punishment ; from which they can never hope to escape, or be released, or advanced. And most dreadful of all will be the final Punishment of the apostate Angels ; far greater, and more despicable than the worst of Mankind.

But though God's Eternal Judgments are not limited, Woe be to the Presumptuous, for they who sin that Grace may abound, *Rom. vi. 1*, will have a double Portion of Torment, *Rev. xviii. 6*, chap. *xxi. 8*.

And if this vast Difference of Man's final State, will not deter from Sin, and encourage to Holiness ; neither will the Dread of Eternal Torment do it, *Luke xvi. 31*, as being contrary to God's Attributes, and to the holy Scriptures in their true Sense, agreeing with that infallible Test of Truth ; and what is contrary to it ought not to be believ'd, nor can be fully believ'd, and so is the Cause of Infidelity and Wickedness.


If it is objected, that Men may implead each other, as soon as both Parties are dead ; and then receive their final Sentence ? I answer. The Body is Partaker of the Soul's Iniquity, *2 Cor. vii. 1*, *Rom. vii. 23* ; and as its first Punishment is Death, its last Punishment, if impenitent, will be the second Death, with its Soul, *Rev. xx. 8* ; and till the Resurrection, they are not only separated, but their Accusers Souls may be in Heaven, and theirs in Hell, *Luke xvi. 22, 23*, between which there is a Gulph fixed, ver. *26*, and they are not to meet, till the final Judgment, at the End of this World, *Mat. xxiv. 31*, ch. *xxv. 31, 32* ; for as they sinn'd in their whole Man, their final

final Condemnation, will be in their whole Man ; at the Reunion of their separated Soul and Body, at the last Day of the World ; and it cannot be rationally imagin'd to be sooner pronounced.

I believe that God's universal Church Militant on Earth, enjoys a holy Communion in Faith and Christian Love, in social Duties, and in the Participation of holy Offices and Sacraments, in the Peace of God, and in Tranquillity of Mind, though in worldly Tribulation ; and it will at last be Christ's Church Triumphant in Heaven ; in which the Saints will have a most perfect and joyous Communion ; and join in Comfort with the happy heavenly Choir of holy Angels ; and will, in the most rapturous Joy and Delight, ever humbly and gratefully sing God's glorious Praise to all Eternity.

And lastly, I believe, that these Divine Truths were not, nor could be clearly known by the Light of Man's Nature ; but as is evidenced by God's Holy Attributes, were most certainly revealed by God to Man ; in a Manner supernatural to our Nature, though not to God ; first by a Similitude of some Form that is visible, and a Voice suitable to Man's Nature, promulg'd to *Adam* ; and afterwards repeated and repromulg'd to the Patriarchs and Prophets ; and finally by our Lord and Saviour, and by the Holy Spirit to the Apostles, and by them to all Mankind ; so that Man is without Excuse for Ignorance ; and if wilfully ignorant, he has nothing to plead for Mercy. But the Want of Means or Capacity will not be laid to any Man's Charge.

And all God's revealed Will and Laws to Man, which imply and include all these Articles of Faith ; and all that he requires of us to know, and to believe and practice ; are faithfully recorded, and by God's wonderful Providence, are preserved in the Holy Scriptures of Truth ; and are, by the Guidance of the Holy Spirit, rightly understood ; by Man's Reason, apply'd to, and try'd by God's Self-evident Attributes, which are an unerring Explanation, and the only infallible Test of all religious Truth ; Which plainly shews, that our Faith being proved true, by our Obedience to all God's Holy Laws, our good Works will be graciously rewarded ; and so do tend to, and will end in our final Good ; not for our own Merits,

as all our Sufficiency is of God, and our Deficiency in the Use of the Faculties and Powers which God has given us, very great ; so that all our Dependance is on the alone Merits of our blessed Lord and Saviour, *Jesus* Christ : for whose all-powerful Merits, and prevalent Mediation ; and for the boundless Love of God the Father, and the blessed and effectual Sanctification of the Holy Spirit ; let us be most humbly Thankful : And to whom,  to the Holy, Blessed, and Glorious Trinity in Unity of the Deity ; be most humbly ascribed, all Glory, Honour, Wisdom, Power, Majesty, and Dominion ; and to him be ever render'd, all Adoration and Reverence, Homage and Obedience, blessing, Thanksgiving, and Praise Eternally, *Amen*.

All Glory be to God the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, the Ever Blessed Trinity in Unity of the Deity.

As it was from all Eternity, throughout Immenſity, is now, and ever will be Eternally, *Amen*.

N. B. As it was in the Beginning is improper to an Eternal Being ; and the Term *will be*, &c. is an Act of Faith, but *shall be*, looks like a Sort of Command.





- A P P E N D I X.

WHEN this Essay was near fully printed : it was objected to me, That to affirm that Immenſity was full of God's Works, &c. was to think that God acts by Neceſſity, and not of Choice or Free-Will.

But to ſuppoſe that Immenſity is an empty Vacuum, void of Creation, about our Solar System, and the viſible Conſtellations : rather ſuppoſes a Neceſſity of its being ſo, through a Deſiciency in God's proliſick and productive Nature, and efficient Power, or Want of Acting ; or that he is unable to do more, or unwilling to do what he can, and proves nothing, but I ſhall prove it to be an Error ; and that theſe narrow Conceptions proceed from Want of Free and Unbiſſiate Thought, and a Fondneſs of their own ſcanty Opinions ; for Want of trying their fallible Reaſon, by God's Self-evident Attributes, as the only inalienable Teſt of Truth.

God, by infinite Wiſdom, wills and chuſes freely ; and by his infinite Power acts accordingly. He does nothing of Neceſſity ; but he does all Things that are neceſſary to eternal End, in ultimate Perfection ; and is ever active every where, throughout Immenſity, and not in Part only : for Immenſity is God's Throne and Place of Habitation, *1 Kings viii. 27, Iſaiab lxvi. 1, Acts vii. 44, John iv. 2, R. 2. chap. 12. chap. v. 13, chap. vi. 11, 12, 13, chap. vii.* and through the whole Book, ſhews that God is preſent throughout Immenſity, by innumerable Angels, and glory & Saints.

And to this Truth Philoſophy agrees ; acknowledging, that God cannot do any Thing that is not agreeable to his Attributes, nor omit to do any Thing that is not contrary to them. God fills all Things, and is no where alone : his Dominion is as boundleſs and endleſs as his
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Being is ; and he does not govern nothing ; it being contrary to his Essence and Attributes, to have any Part of Immensity empty. God is ever active, and ever easy in acting, and it no more disturbs his Ease and Rest, to fill Immensity with his Works and Creatures, and to preserve and govern them, than in but a Part : Besides, whatever is less than Immensity, is as nothing to it ; and it depreciates and derogates from God's Glory, and is contrary to his Attributes to imagine, that his Dominion is less than his Infinite Being ; or that he resides in, and governs an empty void Space, and is not throughout all Immensity, ever honoured, praised, magnified, and glorified by rational Creatures.

A wise, potent, and good King would not suffer a great Part of his Dominions to be unpeopled, it being better to make many happy, than but a few ; and their Gratitude must needs be delightful to him. And as God's Glory endures for ever, it does the same every where ; and as he delights and rejoices in all his Works, *Psal. civ. 31*, he will not let any Place or Space be empty, in his boundless and endless Dominions ; but be filled to his Glory, and his Creatures ultimate Happiness : Not but that God will be glorify'd in the Condemnation of the wicked Impenitent ; as well as in the Felicity of the Righteous, or Penitent, through Christ's Merits, to God's Glory.

I cannot fully conclude, without taking Notice, that the Increase of Deism, and Disbelief of Divine Revelation, proceeds from the Holy Scripture's being, in some material Parts, disjoyned, and irregularly placed ; as in the Scheme of Creation, &c. ; and particularly in *Ezekiel's* Prophecy, of the Destruction of *Tyrus*, by *Nebuchadnezzar* ; which was not finally destroyed till many Centuries after his Death.

But if they will search the Scriptures, as commanded, *John v. 39*, they will find, that *Tyrus* was to suffer two Destructions, and was almost destroyed by *Nebuchadnezzar*, though it was not finally destroyed till long after his Death.

The Prophecy is apparently disjoyned and misplaced : The Book rightly begins (as of a Thing of greater Note) with his most extraordinary Vision in the 30th Year of the Captivity. And (except that misplaced in chap. xxix. 17 to 21, in the twenty-seventh Year) his last mentioned Prophecy in chap. xl. is in the twenty-fifth Year ; five Years before the Vision mentioned in the first Chapter, which is duly placed in Pre-eminence, though not in Order of Time.

But chap. xxix. 1 to 16, is a Prophecy against *Egypt*, in the 10th Year ; and chap. xxvi. 1 to 12, is a Prophecy against *Tyrus*, in the 11th Year, and so is misplac'd. It is a Prophecy of *Nebuchadnezzar's* first, but not total Destruction of *Tyrus*, and his Army making a Prey of their Riches, ver. 12 ; and chap. xxix. 17 to 21, is a Prophecy (in the 27th Year) of *Nebuchadnezzar's* Reward : Chap. xxvii. and xxviii. are a Continuation of the Prophecies of the final Destruction of *Tyrus* ; and chap. xxvi. ver. 13 to 21, is the Conclusion of that Prophecy ; and is distinguished from the first Destruction, by saying, ver. 7, it shall be effected by *Nebuchadnezzar* ; and ver. 12, by this remarkable Difference, they, *viz.* his Army, shall have the Prey : And ver. 1 to 6, and ver. 13, 14, to 21, and the two following Chapters, plainly mean as ver. 13 expressly says, that God will, by other Hands, (not *Nebuchadnezzar's*) compleat the final Destruction of *Tyrus* : But as it was not to be soon accomplished, the Time is not mentioned : But it is observable, that the Prophecies of *Nebuchadnezzar's* Destruction of it, ver. 7 to 12, does not say that *Tyrus* shall be no more built ; but after the latter Prophecy, it is said, it shall be built no more : And tho' the Place is kept in Memory, as an Example to deter Men from Wickedness, the City shall never more be in Being. So that the Case is very plain, that the Destruction of *Tyrus*, in those Chapters, are two distinct Prophecies of two different Destructions ; but are misplaced by the Compilers of the whole, into one Book.

I have placed the first and second Chapters of *Genesis*, with other scriptural Mentions of Creation, in a regular Order ; by which, the Whole appears to be a compleat Description of the Creation, in general Terms ; and by which, and by the Assistance of the Holy Spirit, God has enabled
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Man to proceed to a more particular Knowledge of his wondrous Works, and of the Means and Method by which God makes and governs them.

And I have placed the following Part of *Genesis* in due Order, and have prepar'd to do so by the whole History of the Bible, &c. which, when finish'd, will, by the Blessing of God, make the right Understanding of it easy, and delightful to Mankind.

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